



SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

Mass Mailing

Quick Reference

Definition of Mass Mailing

A mass mailing is a mailing of 500 or more pieces of substantially identical content whether mailed singly or in bulk, or at the same or different times, over the course of a session of Congress.

Mass Mailing Does Not Include

- Mail in direct response (*must be mailed not more than 120 days after the original receipt of the written request*)
- Mail to other Members of Congress, federal, state, or local officials
- New releases to the media
- Town meeting notices (*please consult with the Rules Committee regarding the content of town meeting notices*)
- Federal publications or items provided to all Senators or made available for purchase with official funds for distribution
- Responding to a signed petition
- Electronic communications (*please consult with the Rules Committee*)

Mass Mailing Requirements

- Must be sent under the frank
- No more than 2 sheets (front and back) of legal-sized paper or their equivalent
- Prepared by or for the Senator making the mailing
- Information concerning the views of or otherwise relating to the Senator
- No gratuitous biographical information
- Limited to an average of 8 personal references per page. A personal reference is any appearance of the Senator's name, title, or official positions, and the Senator's photo in the masthead. Pronouns such as "I" or "me" do not count as personal references, nor does the frank itself.
- Senator's name other than in the masthead may not have a font larger than ¼ of an inch
- Photos of the Senator alone may be no larger than 12-square inches and a picture of the Senator with others may be no larger than 20-square inches
- Limited to 4 photos of the Senator, excluding the masthead
- Photos must relate to the text of the mailing
- At the bottom of the first page of the mailing the phrase "PREPARED, PUBLISHED, AND MAILED AT TAXPAYER EXPENSE" must appear no smaller than 7 point font
- May not be personal or partisan
- Must be prepared by the Office of Printing, Graphics and Direct Mail
- May not use private funds to purchase paper, print, or prepare any mass mailing
- Must be registered quarterly with the Office of Public Records



SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

Mass Mailing

Quick Reference

Moratorium

- No mass mailing within 60 days immediately before the date of any primary or general election for any federal, state, or local office in which the Senator is a candidate. No moratorium if an election is uncontested and no legal possibility for a write-in candidate exists.
- No Senator may send mass mailing within 60 days immediately before biennial federal general election.
- Town meeting notices over 500 may not be sent within 60 days immediately before the date of any primary or general election for any federal, state, or local office in which the Senator is a candidate. *There is no exception for uncontested candidacies.*
- The 60-day moratorium does not apply to mail sent under the frank of the chairman of a committee that relates to regular or normal business of the committee and does not unduly focus on the chairman.

Request for an Advisory Opinion

If you would like the Ethics Committee to review a mass mailing prior to distribution, a final version of the mailing must be submitted.