

**State of Minnesota**  
**Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board**  
Suite 190, Centennial Building. 658 Cedar Street. St. Paul, MN 55155-1603

**THE FOLLOWING PUBLICATION DOES NOT IDENTIFY THE  
REQUESTER OF THE ADVISORY OPINION, WHICH IS NON PUBLIC DATA  
under Minn. Stat. § 10A.02, subd. 12(b)**

**ADVISORY OPINION 467**

**SUMMARY**

A legislator may use principal campaign committee funds to pay for housing if the costs were incurred because of legislative service and funds from the legislature are not available to pay for those costs.

**FACTS**

On behalf of a registered political party unit and members of the legislature, you request an advisory opinion from the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board based on the following facts as stated in the request.

1. The House of Representatives has not yet approved the housing allowance for the 94<sup>th</sup> Legislature.
2. Members of the House of Representatives are currently living in St. Paul preparing for the legislative session. The cost of securing housing that is not currently being reimbursed is creating a financial hardship for some legislators
3. You are aware that the Board has previously determined that legislators may not use principal campaign funds to supplement the housing allowance provided by the legislature.

With this background in mind, you ask the following question.

**Issue One**

May legislators use principal campaign committee funds to pay for housing expenses until the House of Representatives is able to approve the housing allowance for the session?

**Opinion One**

Yes. As provided in Minnesota Statutes section 10A.173, subdivision 4, some expenses incurred by a legislator for serving in public office may be paid for with principal campaign committee funds. Among the listed expenses are:

(1) the cost of transportation, lodging, meals, and other expenses necessary to attend meetings and conferences when the reason that the candidate attends the event is to assist the candidate in performing the duties of the office held and the candidate would not attend the event if the candidate were not an office holder;

The House of Representatives was scheduled to meet on January 14, 2025. Elected representatives with both political parties came to St. Paul presuming that would occur and to prepare for the session. The delay in the House of Representatives beginning to meet has not prevented legislators from participating in meetings, drafting legislation, and performing duties for the office they hold. Legislators would not have secured housing in St. Paul if not for the office they hold and the assumption that the House of Representatives would meet as scheduled.

The Board concludes that the housing costs described in the facts of this opinion are an expense for serving in public office as provided by Minnesota Statutes section 10A.173. Therefore, legislators may use principal campaign committee funds to temporarily pay housing costs until the housing allowance is established. If the legislature makes the housing allowance retroactive to January 14, or an earlier date, then the principal campaign committee must be reimbursed for any housing costs it paid that are ultimately paid for by the legislature.

Issued: February 13, 2025



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Faris Rashid, Chair  
Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board