

**Advisory Opinion 2015-3**  
**Response to a Request for an Advisory Opinion**  
**from Senate Legal Counsel Richard J. Lehmann**  
**on Behalf of Senator Chuck W. Morse and Senator Jeb Bradley**  
**(September 21, 2015)**

**Please Note: For clarity, references to and excerpts from provisions of statutes or the Ethics Guidelines have been updated to conform to subsequent changes in numbering and language, where the changes have not affected the substance of the Opinion.**

Senate Legal Counsel Richard J. Lehmann has submitted a request for an Advisory Opinion on behalf of Senate President Chuck W. Morse and Senate Majority Leader Jeb Bradley about whether, consistent with applicable statutes and the Ethics Guidelines, the Senators may accept payment for the costs of lodging and meals related to attendance at a conference sponsored by the Republican Legislative Campaign Committee (“RLCC”).

According to the information submitted by Attorney Lehmann, the Senators attended the conference in Boston, MA for two days and two nights, and participated in briefings with elected officials from other states, policy roundtables, and various receptions. The policy roundtables and briefings featured such topics as U.S. energy policy, private market solutions to modernize Medicaid, and cybersecurity.

Based on the information provided by Attorney Lehmann about the conference’s purpose and activities, the event, as described, qualifies as a *bona fide* conference, meeting, seminar or educational program. See Interpretive Ruling 2013-1.

Accordingly, the Committee advises that acceptance of payment by the RLCC for expenses associated with attendance at the conference qualifies for the exemption from the prohibition on “Gifts” under RSA 14-C:3, as “Expense Reimbursement” under RSA 14-C:2, IV(b)(10).

The Senators must report their acceptance of the complimentary lodging and meals in accordance with RSA 14-C:4.

We appreciate the opportunity to be of assistance.

Honorable Donna Sytek, Chairman  
Senator Sharon M. Carson, Vice Chairman  
Representative Janet G. Wall  
Senator Martha Fuller Clark  
Representative David A. Welch  
Honorable John A. Graham  
Attorney David H. Bradley

For the Committee,  
Honorable Donna Sytek  
Chairman

[Vote: 7-0]