



# TEXAS ETHICS COMMISSION



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## ETHICS ADVISORY OPINION NO. 344

*October 11, 1996*

*Whether an individual may make a contribution to a political committee and request that the funds be used only to cover the committee's administrative costs. (AOR-382)*

The Texas Ethics Commission has been asked whether an individual may make a contribution to a political committee and request that the committee use the funds only to cover the committee's administrative costs, not to support a candidate's campaign. The specific question is whether the individual's contribution may be "designated as corporate funds."

Political contributions and expenditures by corporations are generally prohibited, Elec. Code § 253.094, but there are certain exceptions to that general prohibition. For example, in certain circumstances, a corporation may make expenditures to establish or administer a general-purpose political committee. *Id.* § 253.100. *See generally Ethics Advisory Opinion No. 132* (1993) (regarding administrative expenditures). A corporate contribution to a general-purpose political committee for administrative purposes is not required to be reported. Elec. Code § 253.100(d). We assume the requestor asks whether an individual's contribution may be "designated as corporate funds" because the individual would like the contribution to be restricted to use for administrative purposes.

Whether a general-purpose political committee is willing to honor a request to use a contribution from an individual for administrative purposes only is a matter between the contributor and the committee. Title 15 of the Election Code, the Texas campaign finance law, neither authorizes nor prohibits such an agreement. A contribution from an individual to a general-purpose political committee must, however, be reported as a contribution from an individual, regardless of whether the contribution is designated for administrative purposes only. *Ethics Advisory Opinion No. 132* (1993) at 2-3; *see* Elec. Code § 254.031.

### SUMMARY

Whether a general-purpose political committee is willing to honor a request to use a contribution from an individual for administrative purposes only is a matter between the contributor and the committee. A contribution from an individual to a general-purpose political committee that is earmarked for administrative purposes must be reported.