



# Senate Staff Ethics Review

Hypotheticals for Discussion

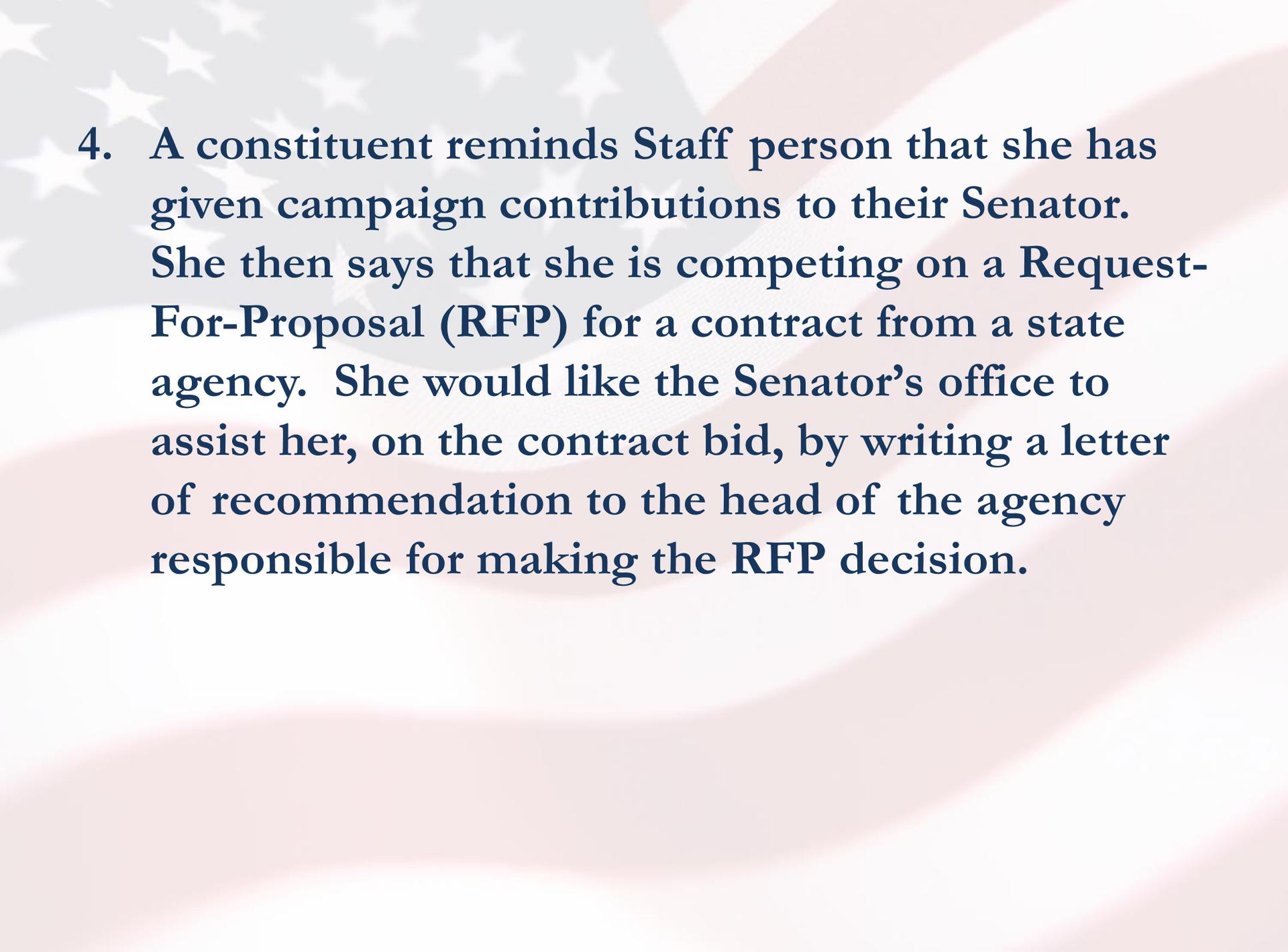
# Hypotheticals for Discussion

- As you review the following hypothetical scenarios, consider the following questions:
  - What ethical and/or legal issues does this scenario raise?
  - How should the situation be resolved?
  - Is there a difference in how the situation should be resolved if it involves you personally, another staff member, or a senator?
  - Who else, if anyone, should be involved in resolving this issue (e.g. the Senate Rules Committee, the Senate Committee on Legislative Ethics, the Fair Political Practices Commission, state or federal criminal justice agencies, etc.)?

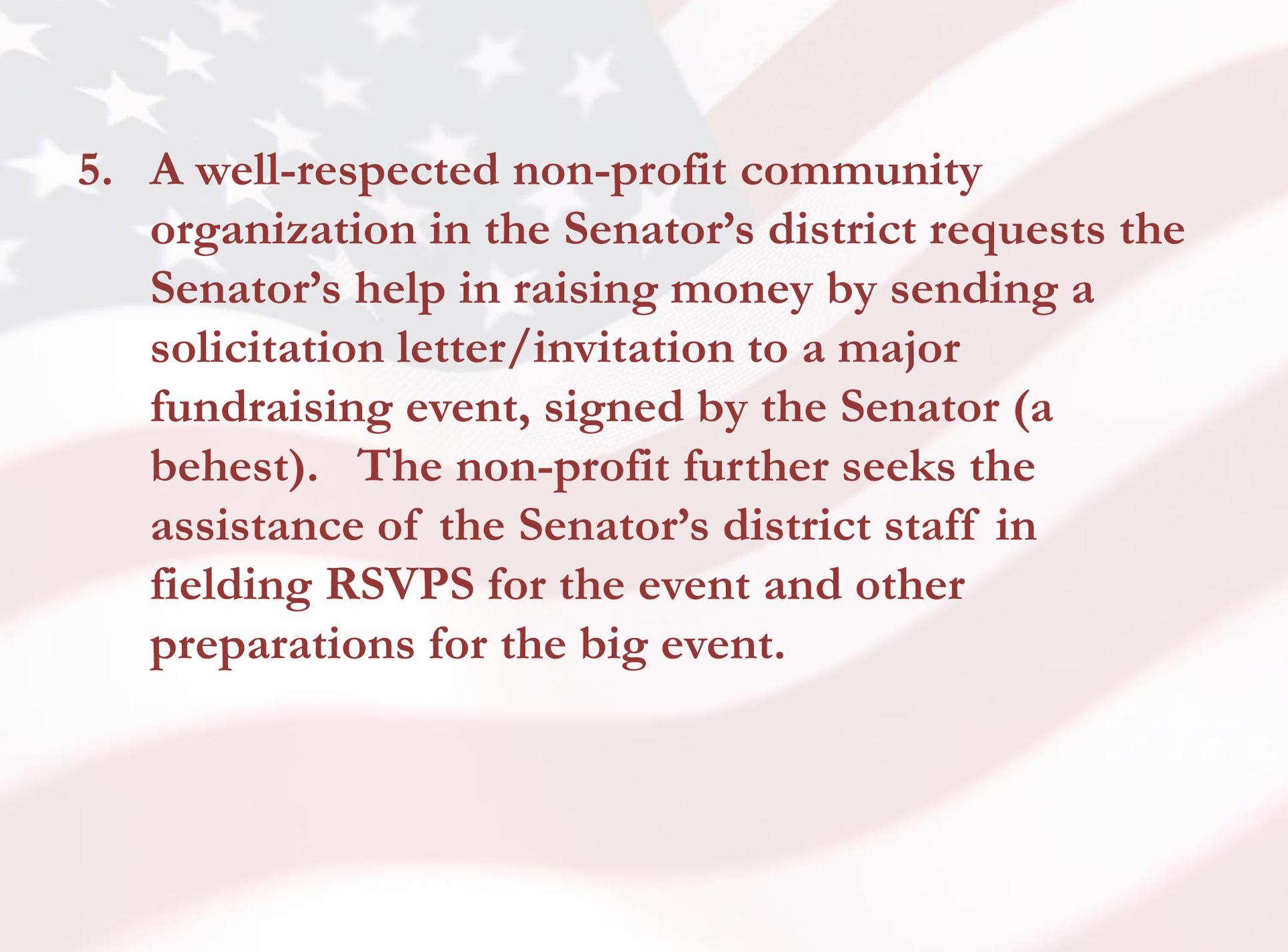
1. Senate Staff person has worked hard on an important bill, SB 10000, authored by Senator. During the course of the bill working through the legislature, Staff person interacted with the organization that is the bill's primary sponsor. As a consequence Staff person is on good terms with several of the sponsor's staff. In fact, at the end of the first year of the two year session, one of the organization's staff, J. Doe, sends Staff person two tickets to a San Francisco Giants baseball game, as a token of appreciation for all the work Staff person has done and still needs to do on the complex bill. J. Doe tells Staff person more Giants tickets will be available in the future.

2. Staff person works for a termed out member or a member planning to leave the Legislature at the end of the session. A lobbyist is meeting with Staff person at the end of session seeking help and support for a “gut and amend” to deal with an issue for an important client. At the end of the meeting, the lobbyist says, “So what are you going to do after Senator X leaves? Do you have a job lined up? You know, if we are successful on this bill with your help, it would show our firm the kind of person you are, and the kind of person we’d love to have on our team. Assuming you’re looking, of course. As you know, the earnings potential is much better than in the Senate.”

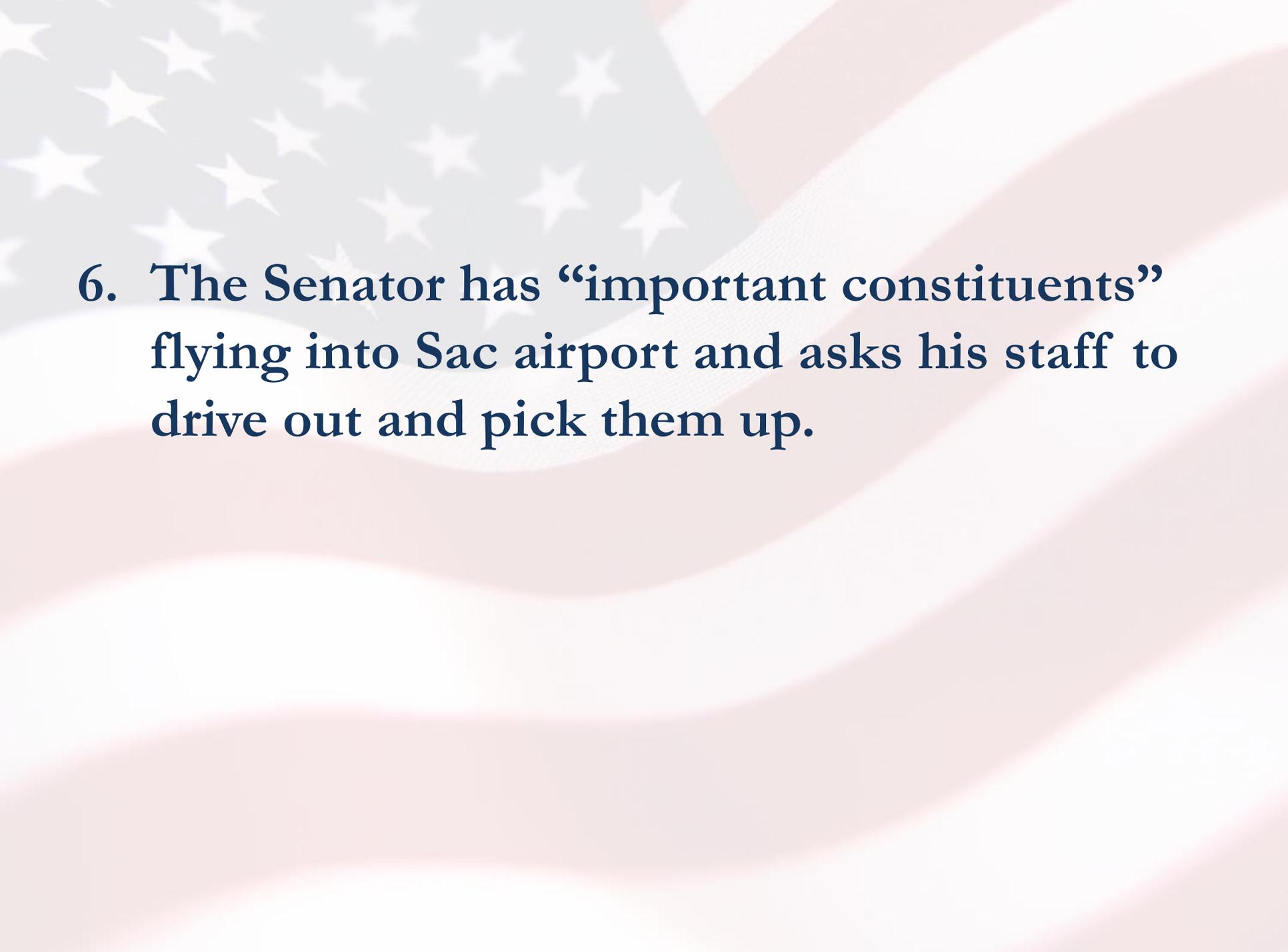
3. Consultant is working on an analysis for an upcoming committee hearing. The owner of a California small business calls and raises legitimate policy concerns with a proposed bill before the committee. Consultant tells the owner it would be most effective if the owner puts the concerns in writing, and also provides information about the hearing time, date and location for the bill. The owner then says, “Ok thanks. Where do I send the check?”

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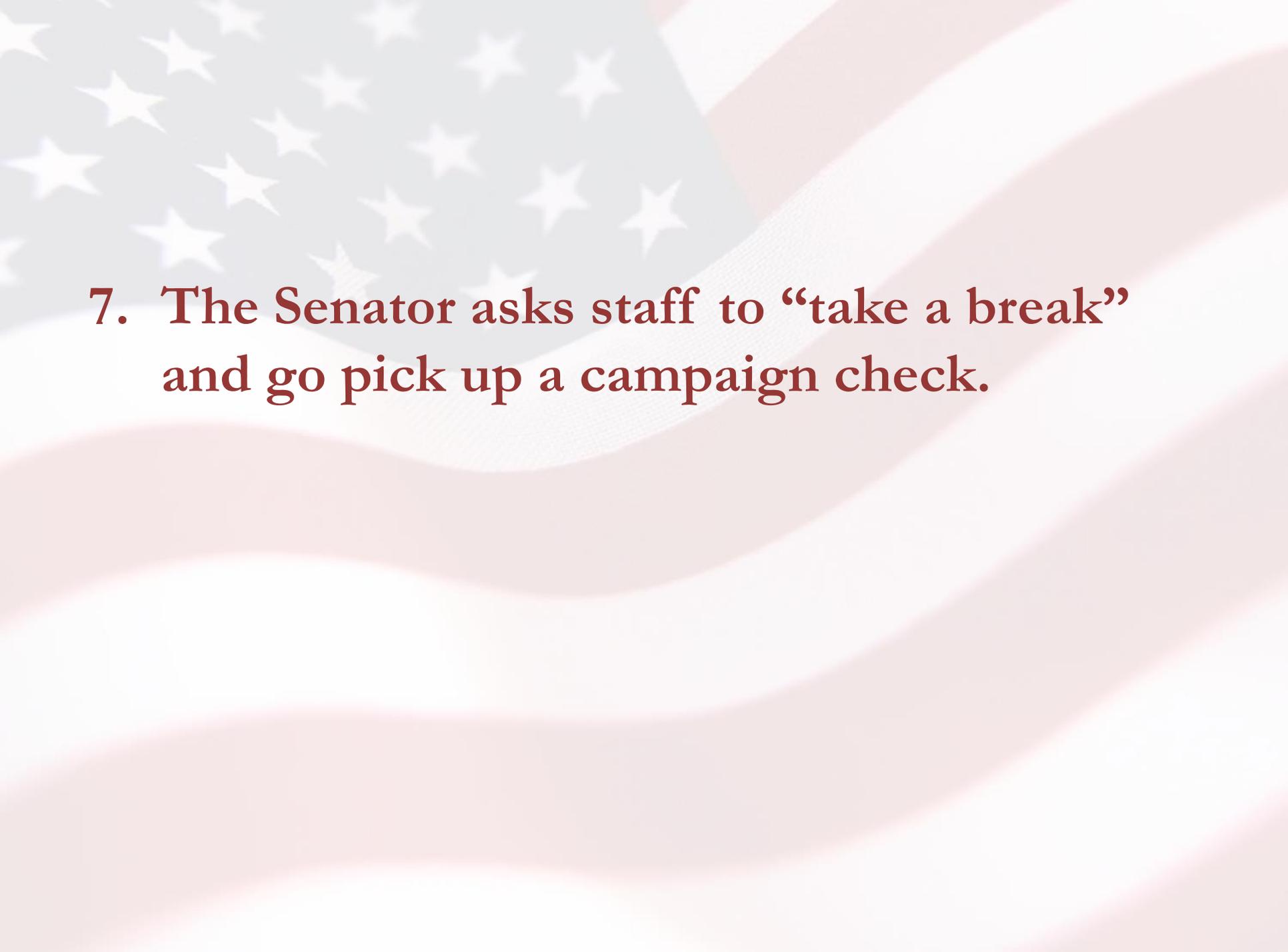
4. A constituent reminds Staff person that she has given campaign contributions to their Senator. She then says that she is competing on a Request-For-Proposal (RFP) for a contract from a state agency. She would like the Senator's office to assist her, on the contract bid, by writing a letter of recommendation to the head of the agency responsible for making the RFP decision.

The background of the slide is a faded American flag, with the stars and stripes visible in a light, semi-transparent manner. The text is overlaid on this background.

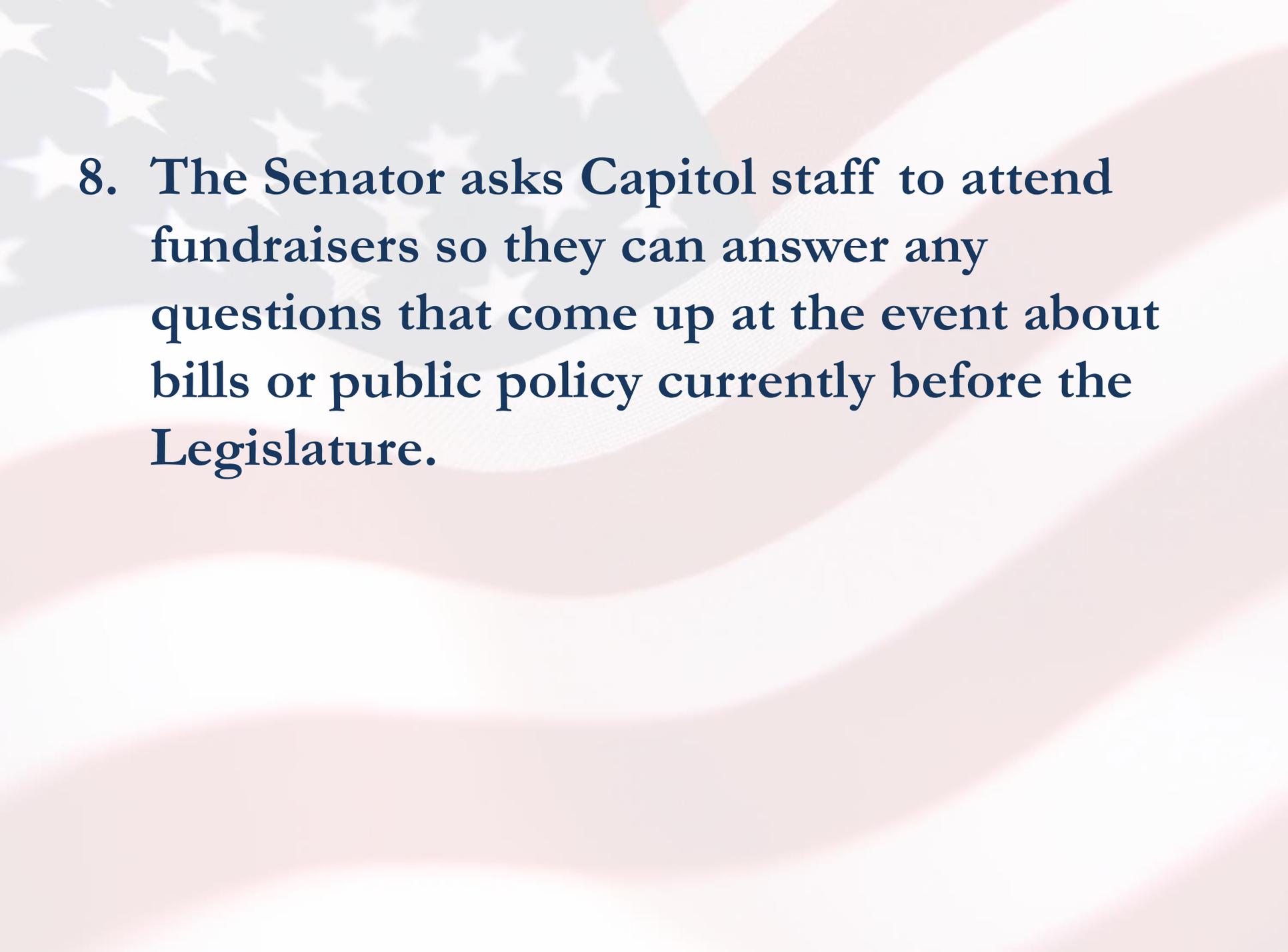
5. A well-respected non-profit community organization in the Senator's district requests the Senator's help in raising money by sending a solicitation letter/invitation to a major fundraising event, signed by the Senator (a behest). The non-profit further seeks the assistance of the Senator's district staff in fielding RSVPS for the event and other preparations for the big event.

A faded, light-colored American flag with stars and stripes, serving as a background for the text.

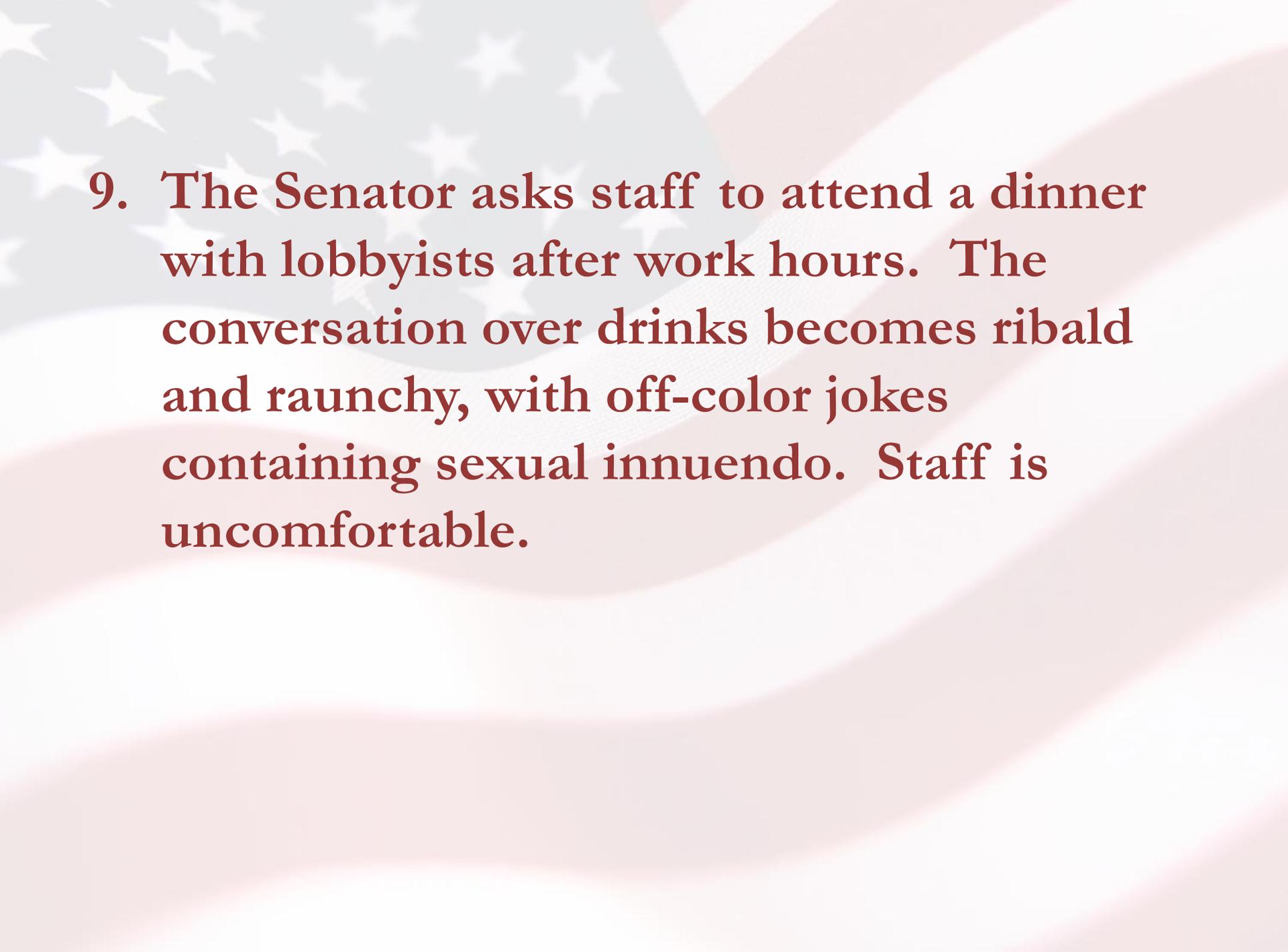
**6. The Senator has “important constituents” flying into Sac airport and asks his staff to drive out and pick them up.**

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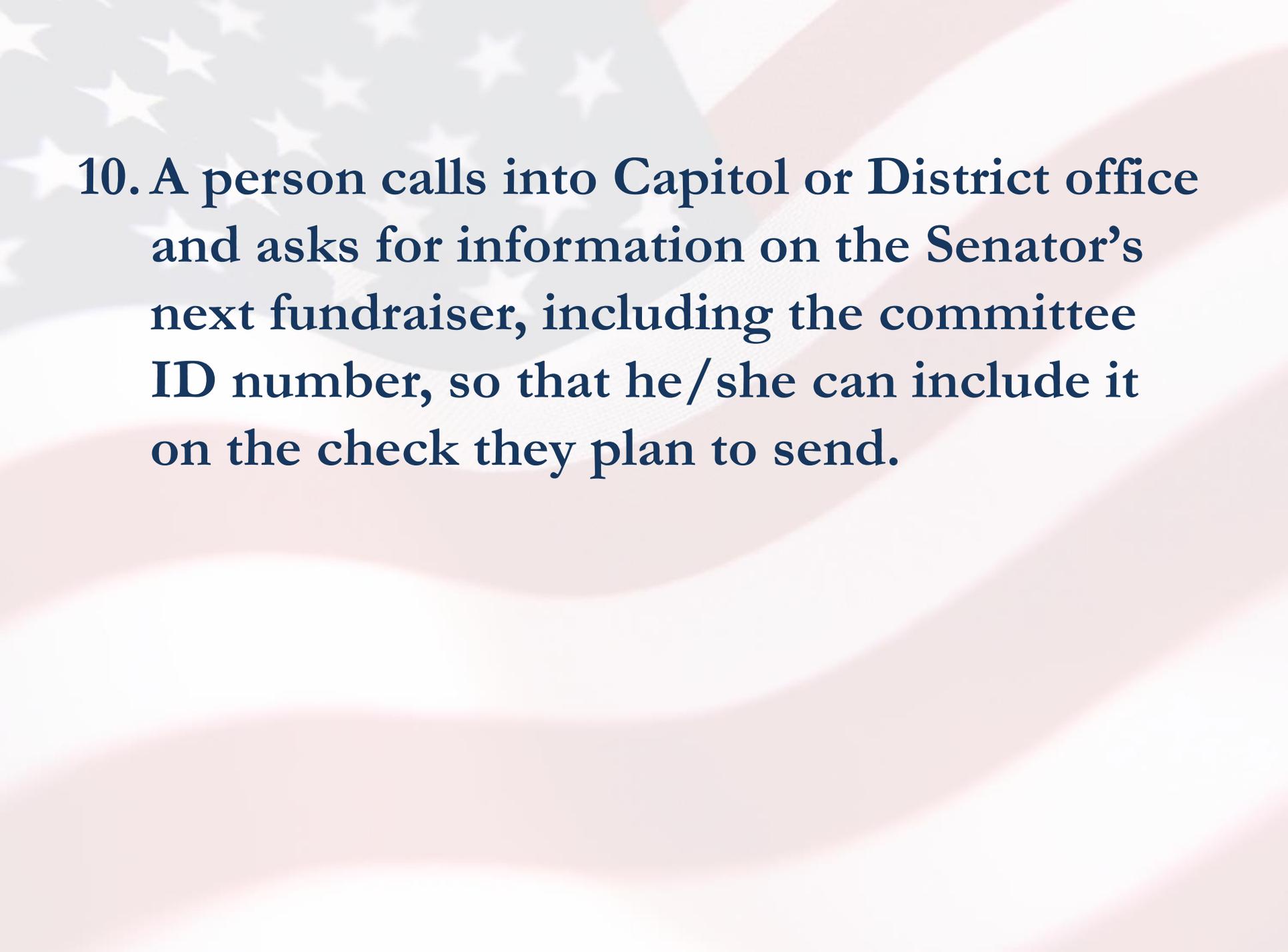
**7. The Senator asks staff to “take a break”  
and go pick up a campaign check.**

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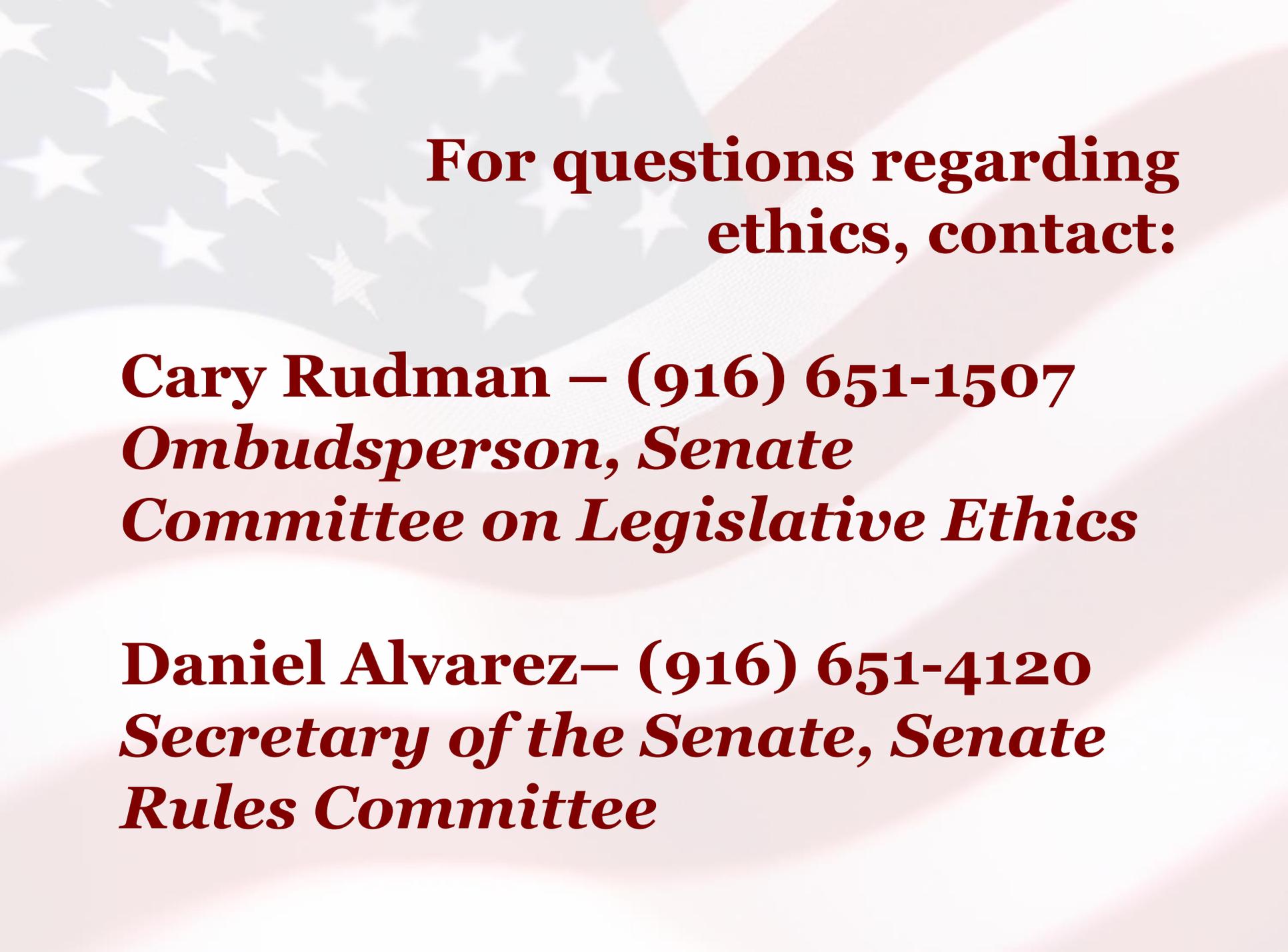
**8. The Senator asks Capitol staff to attend fundraisers so they can answer any questions that come up at the event about bills or public policy currently before the Legislature.**

A faded, light-colored American flag is visible in the background, with the stars and stripes clearly discernible. The text is overlaid on this background.

9. The Senator asks staff to attend a dinner with lobbyists after work hours. The conversation over drinks becomes ribald and raunchy, with off-color jokes containing sexual innuendo. Staff is uncomfortable.

The background of the slide is a faded, light-colored American flag with stars and stripes. The text is centered and reads:

**10. A person calls into Capitol or District office and asks for information on the Senator's next fundraiser, including the committee ID number, so that he/she can include it on the check they plan to send.**

The background of the slide is a stylized American flag with white stars on a blue field and red and white stripes. The text is overlaid on this background.

**For questions regarding  
ethics, contact:**

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***Rules Committee***