

United States Senate

March 7, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington D.C., 20500

Mr. President:

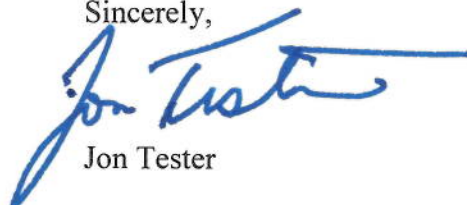
I write today regarding your "Ethics Commitments by Executive Branch Appointees" Executive Order, signed January 28, 2017. I am a strong believer that the best government is transparent and accountable to the people it serves. I appreciate that you signed an Executive Order that includes provisions like a five-year lobbying ban on Administration officials. This is an area where we can work closely together. With that said, I respectfully urge you to improve this ethics standard by including a public disclosure requirement.

You successfully ran on a message of cleaning up Washington, D.C. and tightening rules regarding lobbying activity. I strongly believe that a public disclosure requirement similar to the one instituted by your predecessor would send a strong and positive signal to Montanans and all Americans that you will make good on these promises. Transparency and public accountability are vital to the success of our government. We have a unique opportunity to work together on ethics reform to ensure the rules we put in place regarding lobbying activity are properly followed.

In 2009, Executive Order 13490 required that the Office of Government Ethics "provide an annual public report on the administration of the pledge and this order." It is important that you keep this key requirement for two main reasons. First, these public reports disclose whether Executive Branch officials are implementing the Ethics Pledge appropriately during each calendar year. In fact, the Office of Government Ethics has issued seven annual reports since the creation of this requirement, disclosing the number and type of appointees who were required to sign the Ethics Pledge. Second, the annual reports disclose whether the Ethics Pledge has been waived for any appointees, and if so, the names of those receiving the waivers and whether the waivers were handed out appropriately. This information is vital to the success of a transparent government, and I believe this common sense step would go a long way to show the public that all rules regarding lobbying activity are being followed.

I stand ready to work with Republicans and Democrats to bring greater transparency and accountability to the federal government.

Sincerely,



Jon Tester