

DATE

Elizabeth S. Sconzert
Blue Williams, L.L.C.
1060 West Causeway Approach
Mandeville, Louisiana 70471

**Re: Louisiana Board of Ethics Docket No. 2025-523
Advisory Opinion**

Dear Ms. Sconzert:

The Louisiana Board of Ethics, in its capacity as the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance, at its November 7, 2025 meeting, considered your request for an advisory opinion, on behalf of Clay Madden, Mayor of Mandeville, as to whether the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act permits Mr. Madden to use campaign funds to pay for expenses related to Washington, D.C. Mardi Gras.

FACTS PROVIDED

Lee “Clay” Madden currently serves as Mayor of the City of Mandeville. Further, he has filed a 2024 Annual Report indicating that he intends to run for office in a future election. Mr. Madden intends to travel to the 2026 Washington, D.C. Mardi Gras event to engage in meetings with constituents, municipal leaders, and legislators.

Mr. Madden would like to know if he can use campaign funds for expenses associated with travel, lodging, meals and other charges incidental to the event.

LAW

La. R.S. 18:1505.2I(1)(b)(i) provides that contributions received by a candidate may be used for any lawful purpose related to (aa) the supporting or nominating the candidate for election to public office and (dd) the holding of public office or party position.

La. R.S. 18:1505.2I(1)(b)(ii) provides that contributions received by a candidate may not be used, loaned or pledged by any person for any personal use of the candidate or a member of his immediate family.

La. R.S. 18:1505.2I(2)(a)(i)(aa) provides that expenses related to the Mardi Gras celebration held in Washington, D.C. shall not be considered to be personal use by the candidate or by an elected official.

La. R.S. 18:1483(3)(a) defines “candidate” to mean a person who seeks nomination or election to public office.

ANALYSIS

As the current Mayor of Mandeville, Mr. Madden is an elected official. Additionally, as a person seeking nomination or election to public office, Mr. Madden is a candidate, pursuant to La. R.S. 18:1483(3)(a).

La. R.S. 18:1505.2I(1)(b)(i) provides that contributions received by a candidate may be used for any lawful purpose related to (aa) the supporting or nominating the candidate for election to public office and (dd) the holding of public office or party position. Such use of funds is limited by the prohibition contained in La. R.S. 18:1505.2I(1)(b)(ii), which provides that contributions may not be used for the personal use of a candidate or a member of his immediate family. However, La. R.S. 18:1505.2I(2)(a)(i)(aa) provides that expenses related to the Mardi Gras celebration held in Washington, D.C. shall not be considered to be personal use by the candidate or by an elected official. Accordingly, Mr. Madden may use campaign funds for expenses associated with his personal travel, lodging, meals and other charges related to Washington, D.C. Mardi Gras.

CONCLUSION

The Board concluded, and instructed me to inform you, that the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act would permit Mr. Madden to use campaign funds for expenses associated with his personal travel, lodging, meals and other charges related to Washington, D.C. Mardi Gras.

This advisory opinion is based solely on the facts as set forth herein. Changes to the facts as presented may result in a different application of the provisions of the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act. The Board issues no opinion as to past conduct or as to laws other than the Louisiana Code of Governmental Ethics, the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act, the Lobbyist Disclosure Acts, and the conflict of interest provisions contained in the Louisiana Gaming Control Law. If you have any questions, please contact me at (800) 842-6630 or (225) 219-5600.

Sincerely,

LOUISIANA BOARD OF ETHICS

Charles E. Reeves, Jr.
For the Board