

September 8, 2020

Chairman James Lankford
Senate Select Committee on Ethics
220 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Lankford,

The American Democracy Legal Fund respectfully requests an investigation by the Senate Ethics Committee into allegations of corruption on the part of United States Senator Susan Collins. The allegations stem from a recent story in HuffPost detailing a clear pattern of unethical and possibly illegal behavior by Senator Collins of using her official taxpayer funded office to financially benefit her husband and, subsequently, herself.

Upon further review by our organization, we have found the following:

In 2012, Senator Collins married Thomas Daffron. According to published reports, they began dating roughly two years prior, and in 2010 Mr. Daffron and Senator Collins bought a rowhouse in Washington, D.C. together. Mr. Daffron was a longtime advisor and consultant to Senator Collins before their marriage. Mr. Daffron hired Senator Collins as an intern in Sen. Bill Cohen's office in 1974. Mr. Daffron mentored Senator Collins in her early career in D.C. before consulting on her 1996, 2002, and 2008 U.S. Senate campaigns.

Thomas Daffron served as the COO for Jefferson Consulting from 2006-2016. Jefferson Consulting received \$54.95 million in government contracts and \$3.5 million in lobbying revenue between 2006-2016, for a total of \$58,428,029.35.

Through her membership on the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator Collins had congressional oversight over agencies that granted Jefferson Consulting \$10 million in government contracts.

Jefferson Consulting Received \$6 million from the Department of Veterans Affairs. \$850,000 from Washington Headquarters Services, \$370,000 from the Pension Benefit Guaranty, and \$300,000 from the DHS Office Of Procurement Operations, **while Senator Collins served on the Appropriations Subcommittees for Defense and for Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, Homeland Security's contracting oversight subcommittee, and the Special Committee on Aging.**

Of the \$10 million in contracts awarded by agencies that Senator Collins had jurisdiction over, \$767,000, or 7.5%, were **non-compete** contracts.

Beyond her **failure to recuse** herself from overseeing government agencies her husband received business from, Senator Collins aggressively pursued a legislative agenda that would financially and politically benefit her husband.

In 2011, the year before her marriage to Mr. Daffron, Senator Collins voted to repeal the three percent withholding tax on government contractors.

That same year, the Obama Administration composed a draft executive order to require contractors to disclose political contributions exceeding \$5,000. Jefferson Consulting Group made a total of \$443,000 in political contributions from 2006 to 2016 when Mr. Daffron was CEO, including \$5,000 to Senator Collins' campaign.

Senator Collins aggressively opposed the Obama Administration's push to require that contractors disclose their political contributions, and even introduced legislation to block disclosure requirements.

In 2012, Senator Collins also voted against requiring political intelligence consultants to register like lobbyists. According to a bio for Mr. Daffron from an archived version of the Jefferson Consulting Group website, "Tom Daffron oversees Jefferson's administrative and financial functions as well as the day-to-day operations of the firm. He also applies his extensive media and political experience to help Jefferson clients attain their business objectives."

Senator Collins has also voted against tighter ethics restrictions including banning gifts and meals from lobbyists and restricting paid travel.

At the same time she appeared to be using her position as a Senator to financially benefit her husband's business, Senator Collins saw a significant increase in her own personal net worth. In 2011, before Senator Collins married Mr. Daffron, she reported more liabilities than assets and had a net worth that ranged between -\$689,000 and -\$165,000. After marrying Mr. Daffron, her net worth rose and in 2018 she reported a net worth between \$1.7 million and \$5.6 million.

Between 2011 and 2018, Collins' net worth rose between \$2.4 million and \$5.8 million.

As the American people struggle with the health and economic ramifications of a pandemic, they deserve representatives in Congress who are working to help their constituents, not themselves. We strongly believe the clear pattern of corruption and nepotism outlined above warrants an immediate and thorough investigation by the Senate Committee on Ethics, and respectfully request one.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:



55179851D1D74E5...

Brad Woodhouse
President