



U.S. OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL
1730 M Street, N.W., Suite 218
Washington, D.C. 20036-4505
202-804-7000

February 6, 2018

Mr. Austin Evers
Executive Director
American Oversight
1030 15th Street NW
Suite B255
Washington, DC 20005

Re: OSC File No. HA-17-4844

Dear Mr. Evers:

This letter concerns a complaint you filed with the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) alleging the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Scott Pruitt, violated the Hatch Act. Specifically, you alleged that Mr. Pruitt used his official position to fund travel to Oklahoma for political reasons.¹ We conducted an inquiry into these allegations, and for the reasons explained below, OSC is closing the above-referenced file without further action.

The Hatch Act, 5 U.S.C. §§ 7321-7326, governs the political activity of federal civilian executive branch employees, including Senate-confirmed Presidential appointees, like the EPA Administrator. Among other things, the Hatch Act prohibits employees from using their official authority or influence for the purpose of affecting the result of an election. 5 U.S.C. § 7323(a)(1).

Your complaint alleged that Mr. Pruitt's travel to Oklahoma during the first three months of his tenure as EPA Administrator might be related to his "political ambitions for future state office." OSC confirmed that Mr. Pruitt, after becoming EPA Administrator, traveled to Oklahoma in his official capacity on ten occasions between March and May 2017. However, OSC found no evidence that Mr. Pruitt used government resources to travel to Oklahoma to support a future candidacy for state office, as alleged. Therefore, OSC has concluded that Mr. Pruitt's travel to Oklahoma did not violate the Hatch Act. Accordingly, we are closing our file in this matter. If you have any questions, please contact me at (202) 804-7084.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ana Galindo-Marrone".

Ana Galindo-Marrone
Chief, Hatch Act Unit

¹ We did not consider whether Mr. Pruitt's travel to Oklahoma for personal reasons may have violated other government ethics rules, wasted government funds, or if it was an abuse of authority. Such allegations do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Hatch Act.