



U.S. OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL

1730 M Street, N.W., Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20036-4505


November 25, 1997

This letter is in response to the information that you forwarded to the Office of Special Counsel concerning the Hatch Act. Specifically, you ask whether the Act would prohibit employees who live in federal housing from displaying political signs in the windows or on the front lawn of their homes.

The Hatch Act Reform Amendments of 1993 (5 U.S.C. §§ 7321-7326) generally permit most federal employees to actively participate in partisan political management and partisan political campaigns. However, employees are prohibited from engaging in political activity while on duty or while in a room or building occupied in the discharge of official duties.

The Act specifically prohibits a covered employee from engaging in activity in a room or building occupied in the discharge of official duties. Because housing units would not be considered rooms or buildings occupied in the discharge of official duties, the Hatch Act would not prohibit employees from displaying political signs in their homes or on their lawns. For your information I have enclosed our booklet, Political Activity and the Federal Employee, which explains the application of the Hatch Act. Please call me at (202) 653-7143 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Karen Dalheim
Attorney