

Omar Ashmawy  
Chief Counsel  
Office of Congressional Ethics  
U.S. House of Representatives  
425 3rd Street, S.W. Suite 1110  
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Mr. Ashmawy,

Americans for Public Trust respectfully requests that the Office of Congressional Ethics (“OCE”) investigate whether Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has misappropriated her taxpayer-funded Members’ Representational Allowance (“MRA”) for campaign purposes, in contravention of federal law and the standards of the House of Representatives.

I. Background

Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez represents New York’s 14th Congressional District.<sup>1</sup> Representative Ocasio-Cortez’s Fourth Quarter MRA shows several troubling expenses. On December 13, 2024, she made expenditures to “Juan D Gonzalez” for \$3,700, and “Bombazo Dance Co Inc.,” for \$850. Both expenditures included the description “training.”<sup>2</sup>

STATEMENT OF DISBURSEMENTS							
DATE	VOUCHER NO.	PAYEE	SERVICE DATES		DESCRIPTION	YTD AMOUNT	QUARTERLY AMOUNT
MEMBERS REPRESENTATIONAL ALLOW—Con.							
2024 HON. ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ—Con.							
10-21	AP 01782347	CITI PCARD-ALL HANDS IN MOTION, LLC .....	09/13/24	09/13/24	TRANSLATN AND INTERPRET SERV .....	391.40	
10-21	AP 01783245	COMPLETE CONTRACTING SYSTEMS INC .....	10/01/24	10/31/24	JANITORIAL AND MAINT SERV .....	995.00	
10-22	AP 01782955	CITI PCARD-CHARM SOUL CORPORATION .....	09/19/24	09/19/24	LAUNDRY SERVICES .....	60.00	
10-22	AP 01782955	CITI PCARD-CHARM SOUL CORPORATION .....	09/26/24	09/26/24	LAUNDRY SERVICES .....	20.00	
10-31	AP 01788112	ROWSHON ARA SARKER .....	09/16/24	09/16/24	TRANSLATN AND INTERPRET SERV .....	215.00	
11-01	AP 01781362	LC INTERPRETING SVCS LLC DBA SIGNNEXUS .....	09/13/24	09/13/24	TRANSLATN AND INTERPRET SERV .....	436.00	
11-01	AP 01786886	MAGDALENA PEREZ CLEANING SERVICES .....	10/15/24	10/15/24	JANITORIAL AND MAINT SERV .....	250.00	
11-01	AP 01788113	AMERICAN RED CROSS TRAINING SERVICES .....	10/04/24	10/04/24	TRAINING .....	1,443.00	
11-12	AP 01789892	COMPLETE CONTRACTING SYSTEMS INC .....	11/01/24	11/30/24	JANITORIAL AND MAINT SERV .....	995.00	
11-27	AP 01794240	MAGDALENA PEREZ CLEANING SERVICES .....	11/12/24	11/12/24	JANITORIAL AND MAINT SERV .....	250.00	
12-18	AP 01796504	CITI PCARD-SCHREIBER TRANSLATIONS IN .....	01/11/24	01/25/24	TRANSLATN AND INTERPRET SERV .....	63.45	
12-20	AP 01795402	COMPLETE CONTRACTING SYSTEMS INC .....	12/01/24	12/31/24	JANITORIAL AND MAINT SERV .....	995.00	
12-31	AP 01800099	JUAN D GONZALEZ .....	12/13/24	12/13/24	TRAINING .....	3,700.00	
12-31	AP 01800102	BOMBAZO DANCE CO INC .....	12/13/24	12/13/24	TRAINING .....	850.00	
						OTHER SERVICES TOTALS:	10,248.67

(Chief Administrative Officer of the U.S. House of Representatives, Statement of Disbursements of the House: Part 2 of 3, 119th Congress, 1st Session, [House Document No. 119-5](#), 2134 (Dec. 31, 2024))

In response to a posting on X, which included a screenshot of her MRA disbursements highlighting her office spending, Representative Ocasio-Cortez posted this response: “100% wrong. None of this is taxpayer money, this is an FEC filing. Be loud and wrong about something else. Try again next time[.]”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, [Home](#) (Mar. 9, 2025).

<sup>2</sup> Chief Administrative Officer of the U.S. House of Representatives, Statement of Disbursements of the House: Part 2 of 3, 119th Congress, 1st Session, [House Document No. 119-5](#), 2134 (Dec. 31, 2024).

<sup>3</sup> X, [@Bubblebathgirl](#) (Mar. 8, 2025); X, [@AOC](#) (Mar. 8, 2025).



(X, @AOC (Mar. 8, 2025))

## II. Law

Pursuant to 31 U.S.C. § 1301(a), appropriations may only be used for the purposes for which they were appropriated.

The Members' Congressional Handbook provides that the MRA may only be used for official and representational expenses. It may not be used for campaign expenses.<sup>4</sup>

The House Ethics Manual provides that official resources of the House must be used for the performance of official business of the House and may not be used for campaign or political purposes.<sup>5</sup> The Ethics Manual warns that “[t]he misuse of the funds and other resources that the House of Representatives entrusts to Members for the conduct of official House business is a very serious matter.”<sup>6</sup>

Members are required to certify that official funds have been properly spent in accordance with House rules and are subject to criminal penalties for false certification.<sup>7</sup>

The House Code of Official Conduct holds that Members must adhere to the spirit as well as the letter of the law and must conduct themselves in a manner that reflects creditably on the House.<sup>8</sup>

## III. Analysis

Pursuant to federal law, the House of Representatives requires that Members of Congress use their official office accounts only for the purposes for which they are appropriated.<sup>9</sup> The Committee on House Administration and the House Committee on Ethics provide specific guidance to Members to warn them of the prohibitions against using taxpayer funds for political purposes.<sup>10</sup> Criminal penalties exist for falsely certifying improper use, including campaign use, of official House funds.<sup>11</sup>

On their face, the expenditures made by Representative Ocasio-Cortez with her taxpayer-funded MRA are concerning and deserve scrutiny. However, her assertion that these expenses are “an FEC filing,” and not reflective of her MRA – as well as her claim that “[n]one of this is taxpayer money” – is both troubling and obviously incorrect. Either she does not know the difference between her campaign funds and MRA, or, more likely, she knows the highlighted expenses were not for official business and should have been paid by her campaign and reported to the FEC. In either case, the need for review by the Office of

<sup>4</sup> Committee on House Administration, U.S. House of Representatives, [Members' Congressional Handbook](#), 5 (2024).

<sup>5</sup> Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, U.S. House of Representatives, [House Ethics Manual](#), 133 (2022).

<sup>6</sup> *Id.* at 134.

<sup>7</sup> 18 U.S.C. § 1001; Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, *supra* note 5, at 136.

<sup>8</sup> 119<sup>th</sup> Congress, Rules of the House of Representatives, Rule 23, Cl. 1-2 (2025).

<sup>9</sup> 31 U.S.C. § 1301(a).

<sup>10</sup> Committee on House Administration, *supra* note 4; Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, *supra* note 5.

<sup>11</sup> *Supra* note 7.

Congressional Ethics is evident because there appears to be a fundamental misunderstanding and carelessness in the process by which her House office authorizes, expends, and reports its use of taxpayer funds.

House Rules are clear: the conduct of a Member must reflect creditably on the House. Members are equally charged with adhering to the spirit and the letter of the law.<sup>12</sup> In this instance, there is neither adherence to the spirit nor the letter of the law. In fact, Representative Ocasio-Cortez's reply to her alleged misuse of taxpayer funds serves most usefully as an admission of wrong-doing rather than any kind of exoneration. Spirit and letter of the law notwithstanding, this misidentification of expenditures – which Representative Ocasio-Cortez is purportedly certifying – is an all-out condemnation of Members' obligation of creditable reflection on the House.

#### IV. Request for Action

Representative Ocasio-Cortez has made expenditures from her official office account that she herself contends should have been reported to the FEC, presumably because they were made for campaign purposes. Americans for Public Trust respectfully requests that the OCE undertake an investigation to determine the extent to which Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has engaged in prohibited conduct—and pursue any and all penalties which may be warranted and available. If it is revealed that Representative Ocasio-Cortez has demonstrated a pattern of using her taxpayer-funded MRA to pay her campaign expenses, we further request a full investigation be commenced by your office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Caitlin Sutherland".

Caitlin Sutherland  
Executive Director

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<sup>12</sup> *Supra* note 8.