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OKLAHOMA BANKERS ASSOCIATION

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ROGER M. BEVERAGE
PRESIDENT AND CEO

August 22, 2003

Mr. Lawrence H. Norton, Esq.
General Counsel
Federal Election Commission
999 E Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20463

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FEDERAL ELECTION
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF GENERAL
COUNSEL
2003 AUG 22 A 10:54

Re: Advisory Opinion Request 2003-22

Dear Mr. Norton:

The Oklahoma Bankers Association ("OBA") unconditionally supports the June 23, 2003, request of American Bankers Association ("ABA") for a Federal Election Commission ("FEC") advisory opinion permitting certain methods of soliciting contributions to the ABA's political action committee ("BankPAC").

In short, the ABA wants its member corporations to assist in such solicitations by having their executives solicit their fellow executive and administrative personnel at the company and then collecting and forwarding those contribution checks to BankPAC. These contribution checks will be made payable directly to BankPAC, and any written solicitations would include all disclaimers required by FEC Rules.

The OBA works closely with the ABA on matters that affect the banking industry. OBA members include banks and bank holding companies. Officers and directors of our member corporations are officers and directors of OBA.

The sole mission of OBA is to represent and further the interests of our members. The OBA is the governmental relations advocate for our members at both the state and federal levels. An essential part of that advocacy is to be able, through BankPAC, to participate in the federal election campaign finance process.

To suggest that an executive of one of our member banks could make solicitations to eligible executive and administrative personnel, but those wishing to contribute could do so only through a direct transaction with BankPAC makes no sense and places form over substance. Substantively, there is no difference between that same executive collecting the same contributions and transmitting them collectively to BankPAC. The only distinction—whether the contributions are transmitted in several envelopes or one—is a distinction without a difference.

We endorse the reasoning offered by the ABA in its request of June 23, 2003, and subsequent correspondence with the FEC. The OBA joins the ABA in respectfully requesting an affirmative advisory opinion.

Respectfully,

