



# Convention of States Texas

## Field Guide to Legal Landmines

The following applies to what we can and cannot do while acting in an official volunteer capacity for COS.

### I. Candidates for publicly elected office

- We cannot state or imply our endorsement of or opposition to a candidate for *publicly* elected office, which means we cannot encourage people to vote for or against a given candidate
- We cannot express an opinion as to whether a candidate should or should not run for or be elected to office
- We cannot wear our COS buttons while block-walking for a candidate
- We *can* lobby for legislators to win positions of authority within the legislature ( e.g. COS can express support for a pro-COS legislator to be chosen as Speaker of the House)

### II. Political parties and PACs

- As with candidates, we can neither encourage nor discourage people from voting or getting involved with a specific political party or Political Action Committee
- If COS has a booth at a party event, we can announce that fact and encourage people to volunteer at our booth.

### III. Current Legislators

- We can and should engage with current legislators on a variety of matters, but in our official COS capacity, we must be careful that we not promote legislators as *candidates* or promote campaign events (distinct from legislative updates or other events)
- We *can* comment, favorably or unfavorably, on legislators' actions and conduct as long as we are not expressing an opinion as to whether one should vote for that legislator

### IV. Legislation

- We can promote and endorse legislation of any sort that is consistent with COS's mission

### V. Events/Presentations with non-partisan groups

- We are free to promote/endorse non-partisan, non-campaign events and presentations with other groups, including Tea Party groups, as long as the event is consistent with COS's mission
- We may promote events or presentations with parties or partisan groups only if it is for the purpose of lobbying the party to support the COS mission. We may *not* promote an event for the purpose of advancing the party's interests.

### VI. Slack, Social Media, and editorials

- The above restrictions apply to Slack, social media, and to editorials. If we can't do it, we can't say it

### VII. COS TX PAC

- The COS Texas PAC ("COST") is separate from COS. It needs to be treated the same as other PACs following the rules under Point II above.
- We can acknowledge the existence of the PAC, but we cannot support it.
- We *cannot* suggest that people should participate in the PAC, either by volunteering or donating to it.

Please note that these restrictions only apply to work done in a volunteer capacity for COS, including any time you are using COS's resources. As a private citizen, you remain completely free to support any political parties, PACs, and candidates of your choosing. We strongly encourage all COS volunteers to be active participants in our political system.