



## Advisory Opinion for Members of the House of Commons

# Gift of Radon Detector

*This document is intended to provide information about your obligations under the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons. Members of the House of Commons are encouraged to contact the Office for confidential advice about their individual situation. Please call 613-995-0721 or email [info@cie.parl.gc.ca](mailto:info@cie.parl.gc.ca).*

As Members of the House of Commons, you are expected to avoid both real and apparent conflicts of interest to maintain public confidence and uphold the highest standards of integrity and transparency. This means that you should avoid accepting gifts or other benefits from people or organizations that may have a vested interest in your decision making, now and in the future. Even when the value of gifts, hospitality and other benefits is under \$200, they must not be seen to influence your judgment and decisions.

Recently, I have been informed that all Members may have received a complimentary digital radon monitor from the Canadian Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists (CARST). The monitor, valued at approximately \$185, was accompanied by a letter from the donor explaining to Members how their constituents may be affected by radon levels, informing them about a monitor loan program and inviting them to meet with the organization. As a result, I am issuing this advisory opinion under subsection 26(4) of the *Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons* (Code) relating to the [prohibition on accepting gifts and other benefits](#).

Subsection 14(1) of the Code sets out an acceptability test that must be determined in accordance with an objective standard, that is whether a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts would conclude that the gift might reasonably be seen to have been given to influence you in the exercise of a duty or function of your office. The test is not whether the individual offering the gift or other benefit intended to influence the recipient, or whether the recipient was indeed influenced. This acceptability test applies even if the person offering the gift or other benefit to you is not a registered lobbyist.

Because the gift in this case was accompanied by a letter offering to meet with Members and discuss issues important to the donor, I am of the opinion that it falls short of the acceptability test set out in subsection 14(1) of the Code. **I therefore ask that all Members return the digital radon monitor to the donor. Please confirm in writing that you have done so with the Office through your compliance advisor.**

As a reminder, gifts, hospitality and other benefits that do meet the acceptability test must be disclosed within 60 days of receipt under the Code. For those Members who are also ministers or parliamentary secretaries and therefore subject to the *Conflict of Interest Act*, the timeframe to make a public declaration is 30 days after accepting the gift or other benefit.

Appropriate [disclosure forms](#) are located on the Office website. If you have any questions about this matter, I encourage you to contact your compliance advisor or, if you do not know your advisor's contact information, you can write to [advisory-conseils@cie.parl.gc.ca](mailto:advisory-conseils@cie.parl.gc.ca). Your advisor will provide you with guidance on how to meet your obligations.

Mario Dion  
Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner