

Wiley Rein's Michael Toner Comments on Social Media Accounts Used by Political Campaigns

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Michael Toner, a partner in Wiley Rein's Election Law & Government Ethics Practice, was quoted in a December 3 *Politico* story about the post-election fate of social media accounts registered to political campaigns.

Campaigns invest significant resources to develop their candidates' online presence, and the legality of transferring ownership of an account after an election is murky, according to the article.

The Twitter account "@PaulRyanVP," used by Republican vice-presidential candidate Paul Ryan during this year's campaign, belongs to the Romney campaign and has been silent since Election Day. It's unclear whether Mr. Ryan would violate U.S. Federal Election Commission rules if he adopted that Twitter handle as his own, along with the account's more than 500,000 followers, *Politico* reported.

"As the technology has evolved, sometimes the [Federal Election Commission] rules don't keep up," Mr. Toner, a former chairman of the FEC who also served as general counsel of the Bush-Cheney 2000 presidential campaign, told *Politico*.

Political campaigns are required to liquidate assets such as office furniture and computers after the campaign ends, and they often use the proceeds from hardware sales to balance their books, according to the report.

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Election Law & Government Ethics

"The FEC is at some point going to have to resolve: What side of the ledger do Twitter followers fall on?" Mr. Toner said.