WE ARE THE RESISTANCE

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Letter to the Editor

$4 Million in Gifts and a CodeNo One Enforces

Tactic: Public Pressure -- 01-Media Outlets
Drive Folder: 03-Public Pressure Templates / 01-Media Outlets

Issue: Supreme Court Ethics — Gift Disclosure Failures
Source: Fix the Court / ProPublica, June 2024

Peaceful · Lawful · Persistent · Collective

TEMPLATE — LETTER TO THE EDITOR (SHORT FORM)

Target length: 150--250 words. Most daily newspapers. Trim to your outlet's stated limit. Always include your full name, city, and phone number for verification (phone is not published). Do not submit to multiple outlets simultaneously -- most require exclusivity.

VERSION A -- DATA-FORWARD

According to a June 2024 analysis by Fix the Court, Justice Clarence Thomas accepted more than $4 million in gifts over two decades on the Supreme Court -- nearly ten times the value of all gifts received by his colleagues combined. He reported fewer than a third of them on his mandatory financial disclosures. Justice Samuel Alito accepted private jet travel from a hedge fund billionaire with active cases before the Court and did not recuse himself.

In November 2023, the Supreme Court adopted an ethics code. It has no external enforcement body. No independent authority investigates violations. No sanction applies to justices who ignore it. The Court has made itself the sole arbiter of its own conduct.

Every other federal judge in the United States operates under binding financial disclosure requirements with external oversight. There is no constitutional reason the nine justices should be exempt. Congress has the authority to establish binding Supreme Court ethics rules with external enforcement. The only question is whether it has the will.

I am asking [my Representative / my Senators] to support the Supreme Court Ethics, Recusal, and Transparency Act and hold hearings on the documented disclosure failures this analysis reveals.

[Your Name]

[Your City, State]

[Your Phone (for verification -- not published)]

VERSION B -- CIVIC FRAMING

We are told the Supreme Court is the final guardian of the rule of law. That claim is harder to sustain when the justices exempt themselves from the law.

A June 2024 analysis documented that Justice Clarence Thomas accepted more than $4 million in gifts over two decades -- most of it never reported on his mandatory financial disclosures. Luxury travel. Yacht voyages. Private jet flights. Real estate. Tuition payments for a family member. All arranged by billionaire benefactors. Most of it invisible to the public until investigative journalists found it.

The Supreme Court's response was an ethics code with no enforcement mechanism, no external investigator, and no consequence for violations. An ethics code that no one enforces is not an ethics code. It is a press release.

Congress built the Supreme Court. Congress can build the ethics system around it. I'm urging my representatives to do exactly that.

[Your Name]

[Your City, State]

[Your Phone (for verification -- not published)]

SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

- Find your local paper's letters page -- usually listed under 'Contact' or 'Opinion.'
- National outlets: The Guardian (theguardian.com/tone/letters), NPR (npr.org/contact), your regional paper.
- Keep your final version under the outlet's stated word limit -- trim Version A or B as needed.
- Adapt the final ask paragraph to name your specific Representative and Senators.
- Do not submit the same letter to multiple outlets simultaneously.
- Log your submission in Actions_log.xlsx.

Source: Fix the Court, 'A Staggering Tally,' June 6, 2024 (fixthecourt.com) | ProPublica SCOTUS investigation (propublica.org)