

Wednesday, December 21, 2022

Mike Barnes, Chair
Office of Congressional Ethics
U.S. House of Representatives
425 3rd Street, S.W. Suite 1110
Washington, DC 20024

Re: Requesting Investigation Into Background of Representative-Elect George Santos

Dear Chair Barnes,

As president of government watchdog Accountable.US, I write to you today with grave concerns over highly suspect biographical claims and omissions made by Representative-Elect George Santos of New York.

Mr. Santos was elected to Congress in November after running a campaign based on his supposed “full embodiment Of the American dream,” as exhibited by his repeated claim that he had “catapulted himself from a New York City public college to become a ‘Seasoned Wall Street financier and investor.”

On Monday, the [New York Times](#) reported that a “review of public documents and court filings from the United States and Brazil, as well as various attempts to verify claims that Mr. Santos, 34, made on the campaign trail, calls into question key parts of the résumé that he sold to voters.”

Specifically, the [Times](#) report questions:

- **Santos’ Wall Street Employment Claims:** “Citigroup and Goldman Sachs, the marquee Wall Street firms on Mr. Santos’s campaign biography, told the Times they had no record of his ever working there.”
- **Santos’ Educational Claims:** “Officials at Baruch College, which Mr. Santos has said he graduated from in 2010, could find no record of anyone matching his name and date of birth graduating that year.”
- **Santos’ Real Estate Portfolio Claims:** While on the campaign trail, Santos claimed he had a “family-owned real estate portfolio of 13 properties,” but he has not disclosed records of his properties, which the Times was unable to find.
- **Santos’ Charitable Claims:** While Santos claimed he had an animal rescue charity, there was “little evidence that his animal rescue group, Friends of Pets United, was, as Mr. Santos claimed, a tax-exempt organization.”

Accountable.US

In addition to these dubious claims, Mr. Santos reported a \$750,000 salary, more than \$1 million in dividends, and lent over \$700,000 to his campaign, yet he has not disclosed any clients for his company, Devolder Organization, a move that “three election law experts said could be problematic if such clients exist.” Moreover, according to research from Accountable.US, the Devolder Organization became inactive on July 1, 2022, and was only reinstated yesterday, the day after the Times published its exposé.

The Times report also uncovered “the omission of key information on Mr. Santos’s personal financial disclosures, and criminal charges for check fraud in Brazil,” which “have the potential to create ethical and possibly legal challenges once he takes office.”

Thus far, Mr. Santos’ only response to these findings has been a short statement from his attorney attacking the Times without specifically addressing the questions raised about his background in the Times report.

According to the U.S. House of Representatives Rule XXIII Code of Official Conduct, members “shall behave at all times in a manner that shall reflect creditably on the House” – a provision Mr. Santos fails to meet while questions about his background remain unanswered. Additionally, because Mr. Santos does not appear to have accurately completed his personal financial disclosure, it is unclear if he is violating the Code’s stipulation that members “may not receive compensation and may not permit compensation to accrue to the beneficial interest of such individual from any source, the receipt of which would occur by virtue of influence improperly exerted from the position of such individual in Congress.” It is also unclear if the criminal charges Mr. Santos faces in Brazil conflict with the Code.

If Mr. Santos takes office, his reportedly false biographical claims, inaccurate financial disclosures, and undisclosed criminal background will warrant an immediate investigation by the Office of Congressional Ethics. He has refused to address these concerns and must be held accountable for his ethical transgressions.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kyle Herrig', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kyle Herrig
President,
Accountable.US

cc: The Honorable Cheryl L. Johnson,
Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives