

## 10. A Busy Day

Frank is a state senator running for reelection. His schedule today is extremely busy. He starts the morning by speaking to the state chapter of the Environmental Protection League (EPL), a group that lobbies state politicians for stricter pollution controls. The EPL supported Frank during his last campaign, largely because Frank's best friend, Bob, is the chairman. After Frank's speech, he catches up with Bob. Bob's daughter, Helen, has just graduated from college and is looking for work. Frank informs Bob that he has an open legislative aide position in his office, and asks Bob to send Helen's resume to his chief of staff.

Frank then goes to a luncheon held by the Dairy Farmers' Cooperative (DFC). The DFC is a trade organization that has a small presence in the state capitol — most of their lobbying efforts are focused on Congress and in Washington, DC. Tom, a constituent of Frank's, who belongs to the DFC, is very upset at the new national farm bill, which lowered the price floor of a gallon of milk to \$1.00. He tells Frank that it will be impossible for him to make a profit, and that his farm, which has been in his family for 100 years, might go out of business as a result. Frank assures Tom that he will look into the issue. Shortly after he leaves the DFC luncheon, he calls Larry, Tom's congressman, and asks him to raise the price floor to \$1.50. Larry tells Frank that he'll see what he can do.

After lunch, Frank has a meet and greet at the Minority Empowerment Network, a statewide group that researches and promotes laws on voting access issues. Harold, a senior member of MEN's board, says to Frank that he is very concerned about a new set of voter ID laws proposed by the state house. Harold says that if Frank doesn't make an effort to stop the laws in the state senate, MEN will refuse to endorse Frank, and instead support a challenger in the party primary. Frank disagrees with MEN's position on the voter ID bills, but promises Harold that he will attempt to fight the laws in the state senate when they come up for a vote, after the November election.

The final event of the day is a cocktail reception at the state Chamber of Commerce. After getting a drink, Frank speaks with Joe, the CFO of an out-of-state oil company that wants to expand its operations in Frank's district. Joe tells Frank that state environmental regulations are so restrictive that it is almost impossible to drill new oil wells. Frank feigns agreement with Joe — he is actually strongly supportive of the anti-drilling regulations — because he is tired and doesn't feel like getting into an argument. Joe is so happy that Frank seems amenable to his position that he promises

to have the company donate \$50,000 to Frank's PAC, which it does the following week. Frank's PAC uses the money to run attack ads against Frank's opponent.

The remainder of the campaign goes extremely well. Frank wins the endorsement of the EPL and MEN, and coasts to reelection in November. With the help of his new aide, Helen, he orchestrates the defeat of the state house's voter ID laws. He also refuses to support a senate bill relaxing restrictions on oil drilling in the state, and his opposition is crucial to the bill's eventual defeat.

**Study Questions:**

1. Is it ethical for Frank to pretend to agree with Joe about the regulations? Once Frank has accepted money from Joe and used it to be re-elected, is it ethical for him to vote for the continued regulations, in line with his own preferences but against Joe's? Is it ethical for him to honor his agreement with Harold but not his one with Joe?
2. How should state senators balance the competing claims made on them by the multiple individuals and groups that it is their duty to represent?
3. Was it permissible for Frank to hire his best friend's daughter as his legislative aide?