



March 23, 2023

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse  
Hart Senate Office Building, Room 530  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Whitehouse:

I write as president of Independent Women's Forum ("IWF") in response to your questioning of Jennifer C. Braceras, Director of IWF's Independent Women's Law Center. On February 28, 2023, Ms. Braceras testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee on the question of whether Congress has the authority retroactively to lift the ERA's 7-year ratification deadline, which expired in 1979.

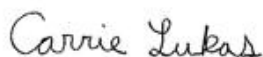
The questions you asked Ms. Braceras had nothing to do with the topic of the hearing. Virtually all of your questions are easily answered by reviewing IWF's and IWV's websites and publicly available tax returns.

1. The two groups have separate boards, maintain financial independence, and otherwise maintain corporate separateness. As is common for many related 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations, however, IWF and IWV share overhead costs and staff as permitted by the IRS. I am certain that if you wanted to learn more about how these arrangements work, you could ask some of the similarly structured left-leaning organizations that provide support for the causes you favor.
2. As Ms. Braceras noted in her testimony, neither organization has office space, having pioneered the virtual work environment that many companies were quick to adopt during the Covid-19 pandemic. This model allows for greater flexibility and participation by the women who serve IWF and IWV.
3. As you should know, neither IWF nor IWV is required to disclose its donors. Indeed, the United States Constitution shields donors from harassment by public and private officials. Your line of questioning demonstrates why this is so necessary. Again, I am certain that you could ask the 1630 Fund or Arabella Advisors to better explain how "dark money" works. This article in the Atlantic (<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2021/11/arabella-advisors-money-democrats/620553/>) is a good place to start.
4. You asked specifically about overlapping officers. That information is all publicly available, at: <https://www.iwf.org/the-women-of-iwf/>; <https://www.iwv.org/staff/>; <https://www.iwf.org/board-of-directors/>

5. You also asked about IWF's relationship to the Koch family. As has been widely reported, there were some connections between IWF personnel and the Kochs in the early 2000s, but those ties were severed years ago. Along with a wide variety of donors, some organizations affiliated with the Koch family have contributed financially to IWF and to IWW over the years, although in total, the percentage of donations that we received from Koch-affiliated organizations in any given year is small. We are proud to be supported by these investors – as, I am sure, are PBS and the variety of hospitals and other charities supported by the generosity of the Koch family.
6. You asked about IWF's work on judicial nominations. IWF defends the democratic decision-making process and our structural constitution and supports judicial nominees who understand that the role of a judge is to interpret the law as written, not to legislate policies that erase women or limit freedom. We support nominees who share these core values, irrespective of political party or the partisan affiliation of the appointing authority. Finally, you asked whether anyone at IWF called the allegations made by Christine Blasey Ford a "publicity stunt." I believe you are referring to a blog that I wrote regarding the decision by Sports Illustrated to recognize Christine Blasey Ford in addition to the very brave gymnasts who stood up after years of abuse to accuse Dr. Larry Nassar. I thought it was a shame that, rather than just recognize the gymnasts, SI included Blasey Ford (who is not relevant in a sports context), thus politicizing a very serious issue. At IWF, we take sexual assault and accusations of sexual assault seriously, and we were saddened by what ended up being a witch hunt against Justice Brett Kavanaugh, which allowed completely unsubstantiated claims to be made and to forever tar someone's reputation, and was a disservice to sexual assault survivors as well as to the American people.

I trust that this letter is responsive to your questions.

Sincerely,



Carrie Lukas  
*President*  
*Independent Women's Forum*