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Kathleen Sebelius Under Fire

A government ethics office says Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius violated a federal law that restricts political activity by government officials.

In a report Wednesday, the federal Office of Special Counsel said off-the-cuff remarks by Sebelius during a February 25th speech to a gay rights group in North Carolina violated the Hatch Act.

Sebelius called for President Barack Obama's re-election and endorsed a Democratic candidate for governor.

In a formal response, Sebelius said that any violation was "technical and minor" and was corrected after her official trip was reclassified as political, and the government was repaid for her travel.

Since Sebelius is a Cabinet official, the ethics office referred the case to the White House for "appropriate action."

Associated Press