



Compliance Notes – Vol. 1, Issue 24

10.08.2020

RECENT LOBBYING, ETHICS & CAMPAIGN FINANCE UPDATES

We read the news, cut through the noise and provide you the notes.

Welcome to *Compliance Notes* from Nossaman's **Government Relations & Regulation Group** – a periodic digest of the headlines, statutory and regulatory changes and court cases involving campaign finance, lobbying compliance, election law and government ethics issues at the federal, state and local level.

Your attorneys, policy advisors and compliance consultants are available to discuss any questions or how specific issues may impact your business.

If there is a particular subject or jurisdiction you'd like to see covered, please let us know.

Until then, please enjoy this installment of ***Compliance Notes***. If you would like to have these updates delivered directly to your in-box, please click below to subscribe to our Government Relations & Regulation mailing list.

Campaign Finance & Lobbying Compliance

Center for Responsive Politics projects 2020 election spending to reach nearly \$11 billion. (Marisa Schultz, *FOXBusiness*)

Colorado: A state court will decide if 180 days means 180 days when filing a campaign finance complaint. (Marianne Goodland, *Colorado Politics*)

Indiana: One top executive of an Indiana casino company that is building a new \$400 million casino in Gary has been indicted and another has left his position following a lengthy federal investigation into allegations of a scheme to direct more than \$25,000 in illegal corporate contributions through straw donors to a former state lawmaker's unsuccessful congressional campaign. (Tom Davies, *AP News*)

Montana: A Montana judge has entered a \$1.76 million default judgement against two now-defunct corporations that were found to have made illegal contributions to 15 candidates who received nearly \$20,000 in free or reduced-price campaign-related services. (Amy Beth Hanson, Associated Press)

New York: Rochester Mayor Lovely Warren was indicted on charges that she broke campaign finance rules and committed fraud during her reelection campaign three years ago. State Board of Elections investigators previously concluded there was "considerable evidence" that Warren, her associates and a political action committee supporting her campaign took steps to intentionally evade campaign donation limits. (Carolyn Thompson, Associated Press)

Elections

Michigan: Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel is charging Jacob Wohl and Jack Burkman with felonies related to a racist robocall in metro Detroit that spread false information about the upcoming general election. (Dave Boucher, *Detroit Free Press*)

Montana: A Montana court permanently struck down a state law that severely restricted the right to vote for indigenous people living on rural reservations. (Press Release, Native American Rights Fund)

Ohio: The Ohio Republican Party has pulled an ad that attacked the wrong person. Launching on Facebook, the ad included a picture of state Rep. Phil Robinson and said, "Phil Robinson can't manage his own finances...Can we trust him with ours?" The ad also included a link to a website that showed information about a 1999 case filed in Cleveland Municipal Court against someone named Phil Robinson. It was a different Phil Robinson. (Andrew J. Tobias, *cleveland.com*)

Pennsylvania: A laptop and several memory sticks used to program Philadelphia's voting machines were stolen from a city warehouse in East Falls. City officials vowed that the theft would not disrupt voting on November 3. (Jeremy Roebuck and Jonathan Lai, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*) Also in Pennsylvania, two Allegheny County council members and a state representative-elect posed topless for a social media campaign to raise awareness about "naked ballots," or mail-in ballots without secrecy envelopes. (J. Edward Moreno, *The Hill*)

West Virginia: A West Virginia postal carrier pled guilty to mail and election fraud after admitting he changed the political affiliation on multiple voter ballot requests from Democrat to Republican. (Joshua Bote, *USA TODAY*)

Nonprofits

Arizona: The Arizona Court of Appeals reinstated a 2017 law that opens the door to "dark money" in state political races, holding that the Legislature was within its rights to decide that any group the Internal Revenue Service classified as nonprofit does not have to disclose its donors, even if it uses the money to finance independent expenditures to elect or defeat candidates. The ruling also allows political parties to spend unlimited dollars on behalf of their candidates without disclosure and states that individuals and

special interests can pay the legal fees of candidates without it counting against contribution limits. However, the appellate judges said lawmakers had no right to limit the Clean Elections Commission to policing only independent expenditures made on behalf of candidates who are accepting public financing. (Howard Fischer, Capitol Media Services)