



# Compliance Notes - Vol. 2, Issue 20

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## RECENT LOBBYING, ETHICS & CAMPAIGN FINANCE UPDATES

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

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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.

Our 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**

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By a split vote of 3-3, the Federal Election Commission (FEC) dismissed a complaint over whether a meeting involving Donald Trump Jr. and others with two Russian nationals at Trump Tower during the 2016 campaign was an illegal in-kind contribution from a foreign national. (Lachlan Markey, *Axios*)

The Wyoming Republican Party paid a \$52,000 fine to the FEC to resolve violations stemming from a missing campaign finance report related to transfers from the Trump Victory Committee in 2016. (Nick Reynolds, *WyoFile*)

**Georgia:** Governor Kemp signed into law a bill that would allow leadership committees to be established by the governor, lieutenant governor, their opponents and the majority and minority caucus leaders of the state House and Senate. Unlike candidate committees, these leadership committees could receive unlimited donations from individuals and from nonprofits that do not disclose their donors. The bill also allows political fundraising during the General Assembly sessions. (James Salzer, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*)

**Ohio:** A bill in the state House of Representatives, dubbed the “Ohio Anti-Corruption Act,” has been introduced and would require 501(c)(4) social welfare organizations to disclose their donors in a similar manner as PACs and candidate committees. (Tyler Buchanan, *Sandusky Register*)

## Government Ethics & Transparency

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**Massachusetts:** The former Fall River mayor, Jasiel Correia, was found guilty on 21 of 24 federal counts brought against him by prosecutors in a corruption probe, including four guilty verdicts related to extorting marijuana business owners in exchange for licenses to do business in the city. (Dan Medeiros et al., *Fall River Herald News*)

**New Jersey:** The former mayor of Hopatcong, Cliff Lundin, was fined the maximum penalty by the State Ethics Commission for using government vehicles for personal business and government computers to view and store pornography. (Eric Obernauer, *New Jersey Herald*)

**North Carolina:** A seldom-used state statute that allows for the removal of elected district attorneys for “willful misconduct” was invoked to unseat Greg Newman, the district attorney for several counties south of Asheville. (Andrew Strickler, *Law360*)

**Texas:** The Texas House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a bill that would require lobbyists to take sexual harassment training. The bill now moves to the Senate. (Madlin Mekelburg, *Austin American-Statesman*)

## Ballot Measures

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**Mississippi:** The Mississippi Supreme Court found that a voter-approved medical marijuana law violated the state constitution because the constitutional provision that allowed for voters to pass ballot initiatives required signatures from five separate Congressional districts. The marijuana initiative only had signatures from four districts because Mississippi lost a Congressional seat following the 2000 redistricting process. The Court overturned the law on the grounds that it was not passed in accordance with the state constitution. This ruling generally calls into question the Mississippi ballot initiative process. (Dareh Gregorian, *NBC News*)

**Washington:** The Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission agreed to accept a settlement of \$3,516 from City Councilmember Kshama Sawant over allegations that she used city money and resources to support a proposed ballot measure. (Nina Shapiro, *Seattle Times*)