



Compliance Notes - Vol. 2, Issue 29

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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.

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

The chair of former President Trump's inaugural committee, Tom Barrack, was charged by the U.S. Department of Justice for violating the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) by acting as an unregistered foreign agent for the United Arab Emirates. (*Axios*)

The Federal Election Commission (FEC) ruled that U.S. Representative Robin Kelly may not raise money for state and local candidates in her role as Illinois Democratic Party chair beyond contributions within the amount and source limits for a federal candidate or officeholder. Funds raised beyond those limits must be

housed in a separate non-federal account over which the Congresswoman does not have power to review or approve and for which she does not appoint any of its committee members. (Rick Pearson, *Chicago Tribune*)

The FEC dismissed a complaint alleging that Senator Rick Scott had used a federal political committee, New Republican PAC, instead of a formal campaign committee to raise exploratory funds for his Senate bid and that the PAC later coordinated its efforts with the campaign. (Steve Contorno, *Tampa Bay Times*)

California: Former Contra Costa County Clerk-Recorder Joe Canciamilla pleaded guilty to grand theft and perjury charges related to using campaign funds for personal use, such as paying off a loan and overseas trips. (Bay City News Service, *Danville SanRamon*)

South Carolina: The South Carolina Ethics Commission fined Horry County Council Chairman Johnny Gardner \$3,650 for campaign finance violations stemming from improperly handling loans to his campaign and receipt of excessive contributions. (J. Dale Shoemaker, *The Sun News*)

Government Ethics & Transparency

Florida: A jury trial has begun deliberations in the federal bribery trial of Tallahassee businessman JT Burnetter. Burnetter is alleged to have extorted and bribed local businesses in a conspiracy with former city commissioner Scott Maddox. (Jada Williams, WTXL) The Florida Commission on Ethics will review allegations that Fort Myers Police Chief Derrick Diggs violated state ethics rules by using a city purchasing card, called a P-card, for meals, boots and a subscription to satellite radio service. The state's Attorney General's Office is recommending that the matter be dismissed because of a lack of wrongful intent. (Bill Smith, *Fort Myers News-Press*)

New Mexico: Following a merger between a global energy company and New Mexico's largest utility, state Attorney General Hector Balderas' relationship with an attorney for the energy company, Marcus Rael Jr., is being examined for improper influence. Rael Jr. had represented the state in numerous other matters before representing the energy company in the merger with the state entity. (Lindsay Fendt, *Albuquerque Journal*)

Nonprofits

Following a Supreme Court decision striking down California's rule requiring donor disclosure of charitable nonprofits to the state's Attorney General, a nonprofit is challenging the constitutionality of New York's and New Jersey's requirements to file their IRS Form 990 Schedule B with each state, thereby disclosing their donors. (Press Release, Liberty Justice Center) (Aysha Bagchi, *Bloomberg Tax*) (subscription required)