



Compliance Notes - Vol. 3, Issue 37

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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

Oregon: Oregon congressional candidate Alek Skarlatos was cleared of violating campaign finance laws months after a complaint alleged he improperly funded his campaign with money from a nonprofit he also controlled. Shortly after losing his 2020 bid to represent Oregon's 4th district, Skarlatos established the nonprofit group 15:17 Trust using \$93,000 left over from his campaign. The nonprofit subsequently transferred \$65,000 to Skarlatos' 2022 campaign. The Federal Election Commission found that Skarlatos' nonprofit failed to raise much money and determined the cash transfers likely amounted to a legitimate refund. (Brian Slodysko, *AP News*)

Tennessee: The Tennessee Registry of Election Finance will audit former state Senate candidate Gary Humble to ascertain if his campaign illegally coordinated with his nonprofit organization, Tennessee Stands, and whether it operated as a political action committee without registering. A Registry board member called for an investigation into Tennessee Stands, a 501(c)(4) organization of which Humble serves as the executive director, alleging the PAC-like group held events simultaneously with Humble's campaign before the election. Under new state law tracking certain activity of organizations within two months of an election, Tennessee Stands would be required to register and file reports with the Registry. (Sam Stockard, *Tennessee Lookout*)

Government Ethics & Transparency

Georgia: Former Atlanta city official Rev. Mitzi Bickers was sentenced to 14 years in federal prison after a jury found her guilty of money laundering, wire fraud and conspiracy to commit bribery. Bickers was accused of using her influence as Director of Human Services to funnel roughly \$17 million in business to city contractors in exchange for over \$2.9 million in bribes for herself and others. (FOX 5 Atlanta Digital Team, FOX 5 Atlanta)

Indiana: A federal judge ordered a local contractor to pay \$104,000 in restitution to the Muncie Sanitary District (MSD) after the contractor pled guilty to fraud relating to a federal investigation into corruption in the Muncie city government. The contractor pled guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud for paying the ex-local Democratic Party chairman \$5,500 in cash to win a contract to work for the sanitary district. The contractor also admitted to illegally giving an MSD official \$5,000 in cash to donate to then-Mayor Dennis Tyler's re-election campaign. (Douglas Walker, *Muncie Star Press*)

Elections & Voting

Arizona: Following a federal court order preventing state officials from taking any action to implement or enforce HB 2243 until at least January 1, 2023, state officials are prohibited from removing voters from the voter rolls before the upcoming election. The law, which was supposed to take effect on September 24, requires county recorders to cancel registrations of voters who they have a "reason to believe" are ineligible. H.B. 2243 also establishes a process for recorders to rely on information from non-election-related databases to determine voter eligibility. The court's order, however, effectively ends the possibility of removing voters before the November elections. (Press Release, Asian Americans Advancing Justice)