



# Compliance Notes - Vol. 4, Issue 13

03.30.2023

## 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**

---

During markup on March 29, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee considered two bills that would amend the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (LDA). S.829 would require lobbyists to disclose any foreign governments and political parties that participate in the direction, planning, supervision or control of any of the registrant's lobbying activities. S.264 would require a statement on the LDA as to whether the registrant is exempt from the Foreign Agents Registration Act as a non-foreign government or political party. (HSGAC Business Meeting Agenda) (S.829 – Disclosing Foreign Influence in Lobbying Act) (S.264 – Lobbying Disclosure Improvement Act)

**Georgia:** The Georgia House approved a bill that would make it illegal for local governments to accept funding for elections from outside groups. Under Senate Bill 222, DeKalb County could keep its \$2 million in private grant money to help run elections. However, the bill would make it illegal for future local government officials to accept outside election grants. (Jeff Amy, *AP News*)

**Iowa:** Candidates penalized for breaking Iowa campaign finance laws could be forced to pay fines within 30 days. According to House File 638, the fine will increase by about 10% if it is not paid within 60 days, and the penalty for a delinquent fine worth more than \$250 is a suspended driver's license. (Ethan Stein, *KCRG*)

**Mississippi:** Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann's campaign filed a complaint alleging that state Sen. Chris McDaniel's violated Mississippi campaign finance law. The complaint alleges that McDaniel's campaign and Hold the Line PAC violated state law prohibiting a corporation from donating more than \$1,000 to a candidate or PAC in a single year. The PAC reported a \$237,000 donation in August from the nonprofit corporation American Exceptionalism Institute. McDaniel's spokeswoman stated the contribution would be refunded to avoid a legal fight. (Geoff Pender, *Mississippi Today*)

### **Government Ethics & Transparency**

---

In a rare move by the Senate Ethics Committee, the panel admonished Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) for using interviews at the Capitol to solicit campaign donations. The letter cites a November 30, 2022, *Fox News* appearance Graham made from the Russell Senate Office Building, where he directly solicited campaign contributions five separate times for Georgia Senate candidate Herschel Walker. The admonishment is not accompanied by any material penalty, and according to the letter, Graham self-reported the conduct to the committee. (Andrew Solender, *Axios*)

**Florida:** The chair of the Florida Democratic Party filed a complaint against Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, alleging that money spent by DeSantis' political committee on a three-day event at the Four Seasons was an improper gift to the governor. In February, DeSantis met with donors and Republican elected officials at the event billed as celebrating the "Florida blueprint." Campaign records show the committee Friends of Ron DeSantis—initially formed to aid DeSantis in his race for governor—paid more than \$235,000 toward the cost of the event. The complaint filed with the Florida Commission on Ethics alleges the spending violates state law prohibiting spending money on activities unrelated to the committee's political work. (Gary Fineout, *Politico*)