



# Compliance Notes - Vol. 4, Issue 15

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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**

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After promising transparency, Twitter has allegedly failed to disclose some political ads disseminated on the platform since early March. According to POLITICO's review of Twitter's activity, at least three promoted fundraising tweets were not included in Twitter's data, seemingly contradicting the company's policies and raising doubts about how many other political ads could go unreported. The unreported tweets identified by POLITICO spanned politicians from both parties. (Jessica Piper, *POLITICO*)

**California:** The Sacramento City Council approved changes to the City's campaign contribution limits effective April 20, 2023. Contributions for councilmembers increased to \$2,050 per person and \$6,800 per

Large Political Committee. Contribution limits for mayor increased to \$4,050 per person and \$13,550 per Large Political Committee. The aggregate off-year contributions for councilmembers increased to \$34,000 and \$67,900 for mayor. (Press Release – City of Sacramento)

**New Jersey:** Governor Murphy signed into law the “Election Transparency Act”, that doubles contribution limits and loosens state pay-to-play laws. The new law requires 501(c)(4) and 501(c)(6) organizations to disclose campaign donations exceeding \$7,500 and retroactively shortens the statute of limitations for the state’s election watchdog commission to investigate violations. (Matt Friedman, *POLITICO*) (Joey Fox, *New Jersey Globe*)

**Pennsylvania:** The Philadelphia Board of Ethics sued a political committee and a nonprofit supporting mayoral candidate Jeff Brown and accused Brown of illegally coordinating with the super PAC. The board alleges Brown violated Philadelphia’s campaign finance law by illegally coordinating with those groups that are supposed to operate independently of Brown’s campaign. The board seeks an emergency order prohibiting the super PAC and nonprofit from spending any money to influence the primary election and cancel any planned advertising or efforts to support Brown’s campaign. The board also seeks \$162,000 in fines, which would be the largest-ever financial penalty for violating those rules. (Chris Brennan, Sean Collins Walsh, and Anna Orso, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*)

### **Government Ethics & Transparency**

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In a letter to Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts, nearly two dozen House and Senate Democrats called for a “swift, thorough, independent and transparent investigation” into Associate Justice Clarence Thomas for allegedly receiving lavish gifts and trips from billionaire Republican donor Harlan Crow. The lawmakers wrote that the investigation should probe whether individuals “with interests related to Justice Thomas’s official duties” joined the trips. Should the Supreme Court fail to investigate, the lawmakers wrote that they would “continue to press Congress to act to restore accountability and ethics at the highest Court in the land.” (Andrew Solender, *Axios*)

**Tennessee:** The week of April 3rd, members of the Tennessee House voted to expel Democrat Representatives Justin Jones and Justin J. Pearson for participating in an unauthorized gun safety protest on the Tennessee House floor. Democrat Representative Gloria Johnson, who also participated, survived expulsion by one vote. On Monday, the Metro Nashville Council unanimously voted to reappoint Jones to the seat, and shortly after, Jones re-took the oath of office on the State Capitol steps. On Wednesday, the Shelby County Board of Commissioners also unanimously voted to reappoint Pearson. (Kirsten Fiscus & Vivian Jones, *The Tennessean*) (Katherine Burgess & Lucas Finton, *Memphis Commercial Appeal*)