



# Compliance Notes - Vol. 4, Issue 16

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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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**Minnesota:** The Minnesota House of Representatives advanced a bill that would streamline voter registration and require groups active in state campaigns to disclose more information. The "Democracy for the People Act" would create an automatic voter registration system, allow 16- and 17-year-olds to pre-register to vote and set penalties for harassing or intimidating voters. Additionally, the bill would expand the types of independent expenditures that must be disclosed and ban corporations based outside the United States from contributing to political campaigns in Minnesota. (WCCO Staff, CBS Minnesota)

**Montana:** State lawmakers have proposed shortening the timeline for prosecuting campaign finance violations in Montana. Under House Bill 947, the time allowed to pursue campaign finance violations would decrease to two years, instead of the current four-year period. The bill also would reduce the time candidates must retain campaign materials, bringing it in line with the proposed statute of limitations. HB 947 cleared the Senate State Administration Committee on an 8-2 vote to send it to the floor. (Sam Wilson, *Independent Record*)

## Government Ethics & Transparency

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U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas intends to amend his financial disclosure forms to reflect his 2014 real estate deal with GOP mega-donor Harlan Crow. Omitting the transaction from the original disclosure was an oversight, according to Justice Thomas, who said he believed he did not have to report the transaction because he lost money on the deal. (Ariane de Vogue, CNN)

**Arizona:** The Arizona House voted to expel freshman GOP Rep. Liz Harris for inviting a speaker to a joint elections committee hearing who spread baseless accusations of bribery and election rigging by elected officials, judges and others. The expulsion vote came after the House Ethics Committee found Harris violated the chamber's rules. Elected Republican precinct committeemen in Harris' district will have five days to nominate three candidates to fill the seat. The Maricopa County Board of Supervisors will then choose the candidate to fill the remainder of Harris' two-year term. (Jeremy Duda, *Axios*)

**Michigan:** A vendor pleaded guilty to funneling thousands of dollars in bribes to a school board president who helped secure school contracts worth around \$3.1 million. John David, the vendor, admitted he participated in a pay-to-play scheme where he "corruptly gave, offered, and agreed to give cash" to former school board President Albert Morrison "with the intent to influence and reward him" with contracts. David now faces up to ten years in prison for his crime. (Tresa Baldas, *Detroit Free Press*)