



Compliance Notes - Vol. 5, Issue 3

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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.

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Campaign Finance & Lobbying Compliance

The Federal Election Commission (FEC) approved an advisory opinion regarding a proposal by a federal candidate and officeholder to establish a nonfederal committee that would be active exclusively in connection with nonfederal elections. The FEC concluded that the requestor may establish the nonfederal committee, which will exclusively engage in activity in connection with state and local elections by providing funds to candidates for state and local office and spending funds to support or oppose state and local ballot measures, and the nonfederal committee would not share a contribution limit with the officeholder's federal leadership PAC. (FEC Press Release & AO 2023-09 (Cortez Masto))

Kansas: The Wichita City Council will vote in March on an ordinance that would undo the ban on corporate political donations enacted earlier this month. The week of January 8, 2024, southwest Wichita's District 4 council member Dalton Glasscock introduced a motion directing staff to draft an ordinance that would restore corporations' and limited liability companies' right to contribute to municipal candidates' campaigns. The previous Council voted on January 2, 2024 to ban contributions from corporations or limited liability companies (LLCs), either domestic or foreign. Council member Dalton Glasscock said repealing the ban will allow for more accountability for the candidates and more transparency in who is contributing to the candidates. (101.3 KFDI)

Government Ethics & Transparency

Florida: The Miami Commission voted to create a new body to hold the state government accountable. Commissioner Manolo Reyes put forward an agenda item to dissolve the city's existing Office of the Independent Auditor General and create a new, stronger body — the Office of the Independent Inspector General. The Miami commission voted unanimously in favor of Reyes' item, which will put a ballot question to Miami voters during the August primary election this year. The ballot question will ask if voters wish to amend the city charter to create the inspector's office. The full scope of the Independent Inspector General's Office duties will be drafted and approved by the Commission in the coming months before ballot language is submitted to the Miami-Dade County Supervisor of Elections. (Joshua Ceballos, *WLRN*)

Michigan: Former state Rep. Larry Inman (R-Traverse City) was acquitted of attempted extortion and soliciting a bribe following a four-day trial in federal court. Federal prosecutors alleged Inman tried to sell his 2018 vote on repealing the state's prevailing wage law, that set pay standards for state-funded construction projects. Inman was alleged to have offered his vote to unions that opposed repeal. Prosecutors' arguments focused on Inman's text messages to lobbyists for the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights on June 3, 2018. In one message to Lisa Canada, political director for the carpenters union, Inman wrote, "People will not go down for \$5,000, not that we don't appreciate it ... I would suggest maxing out on all 12, or at least doubling what you have given them on Tuesday, asap, we never had this discussion." After Inman was charged in 2019, House Republican leadership kicked him out of the House GOP caucus, removed him from his committee assignments and blocked his access to his Lansing office. Then-House Speaker Lee Chatfield asked Inman to resign, but the lawmaker refused. (Robert Snell, *The Detroit News*)

Ballot Measures & Elections

Arkansas: A complaint was filed last week asking the Arkansas Supreme Court to certify the sufficiency of proposed ballot language for a constitutional amendment to require elections in Arkansas be conducted with paper ballots, and for a constitutional amendment to impose certain limitations on absentee voting. The complainants, Retired U.S. Army Colonel Conrad Reynolds of Conway and the non-profit he leads filed, seek the state Supreme Court's certification of the proposed popular names and ballot titles for the two proposed constitutional amendments. In the complaint, Reynolds and the non-profit ask for the state Supreme Court to declare unconstitutional a 2023 state law that requires the attorney general to consider certifying proposed ballot language for ballot measures, and a 2023 state law that requires petitions for proposed ballot measures to have signatures of registered voters in at least 50 counties (rather than just 15). The complaint asks the high court to expedite this case on its docket, enjoin the enforcement of the two state laws and to issue a temporary restraining order and permanent injunction. (Michael R. Wickline, *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*)