



Compliance Notes - Vol. 5, Issue 6

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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

Pennsylvania: Former mayoral candidate Jeff Brown sued Philadelphia's Board of Ethics and its executive director, Shane Creamer, alleging they maliciously attacked him and harmed his reputation during the mayoral campaign. For a Better Philadelphia, the super PAC that spent millions on TV ads supporting Brown, and an associated 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization are also suing. Brown and the groups argue that Creamer and the board knew their legal theory for why the PAC broke the rules was invalid. However, they allege that Creamer and the board's animosity toward constitutionally protected dark-money political groups led them to file a frivolous lawsuit, embarrass Brown and scheme to ensure his primary loss. The lawsuit seeks financial damages for the PAC, a declaration that Brown's rights were violated and an unusual "name-

clearing hearing” that would seek to uncover whether Creamer or someone else leaked information about the board’s investigation to the media. (Meir Rinde, *Billy Penn*)

Government Ethics & Transparency

The Department of Justice is investigating whether Representative Cori Bush (D-Mo.) misused campaign funds for her personal security. A person familiar with the investigation told The Associated Press that federal prosecutors have been asking questions about Bush’s security expenses, the threats she received and her decision to pay her now-husband Cortney Merritts with campaign funds to provide security. The issue of how Bush has been funding her security is currently under investigation by the Federal Election Commission and the House Committee on Ethics. (Farnoush Amiri, *AP News*)

Oregon: The Oregon Supreme Court ruled that 10 Republican state senators who staged a record-long walkout last year to stall bills on abortion, transgender health care and gun rights cannot run for reelection. The court’s ruling upholds the secretary of state’s decision to disqualify the senators from the ballot under a voter-approved measure to stop such boycotts. Measure 113, passed by voters in 2022, amended the state constitution to bar lawmakers from reelection if they have more than ten unexcused absences. All parties in the suit had sought clarity on the issue before the March 2024 filing deadline for candidates who want to run in this year’s election. (Claire Rush, *AP News*)

Ballot Measures & Elections

Mississippi: The Mississippi House of Representatives passed a proposed constitutional amendment to create a new state initiative and referendum process that would prevent Mississippians from placing an initiative on the ballot to change the state’s strict anti-abortion laws. House Concurrent Resolution 11, which passed 80-39, would give citizens the ability to gather signatures to propose new state laws or change existing laws, but it bans them from placing an issue on a statewide ballot about abortion. The proposal now heads to the Senate for consideration, and a Senate committee has until April 2 to pass it out of committee. (Taylor Vance, *Mississippi Today*)