
LOS ANGELES CITY ETHICS COMMISSION

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Contact: Barbara Freeman
(213) 978-1960

Council Committee Resolves Remaining Lobbying Reform Issues

Final Package Expected Within 30 Days

Following up on lobbying reform issues that have been stalled since January, the Los Angeles City Council's Rules, Elections and Intergovernmental Relations Committee today took action on one of the last remaining elements in a lobbying reform package that was first proposed 19 months ago by the City Ethics Commission. Based on the Committee's action today, and if approved in final form by the full City Council and the Mayor, City Hall lobbyists would be required to disclose on quarterly public reports the charitable contributions of \$1,000 or more that they make at the request of any elected City official. Lobbyists already are required to report the campaign contributions that they make to City officials and candidates and, starting in July, would also be required to report all political fundraising they conduct on behalf of those elected officials.

"These new disclosures will allow the press and public to hold elected officials more accountable because information that hasn't been available before now will be," said Commission Executive Director LeeAnn M. Pelham. "It is important that the public know about the full range of financial relationships that exist between their elected officials and the people who are paid to influence them."

The Rules Committee today voted to reject a City Ethics Commission recommendation to prohibit elected officials from being able to vote on matters involving lobbyists who give large contributions at the request of an elected official to the charity of that official's choice or who gave to or fundraised for any ballot measure committee controlled by an elected official.

Last January, the City Council adopted several provisions of the Ethics Commission's lobbying reform package including a ban on officials acting on matters involving a lobbyist who attempts to influence them if that lobbyist in the prior 12 months made contributions of at least \$7,000 to committees controlled by the elected official or engaged in significant fundraising to those committees. The Ethics Commission sought to have contributions given to *any* committee controlled by an elected official count toward the recusal threshold. The Rules Committee today, however, voted to *exclude* the unlimited contributions allowed by law given to an elected official's

ballot measure committees, such as those formed to oppose the recent secession efforts, and instead opted for public disclosure of those activities.

Another provision passed by the full Council in January requires elected officials to abstain from voting on matters that involve lobbyists who engaged in “fundraising activities,” such as hosting or sponsoring an event to raise contributions, totaling at least \$10,000 on behalf of the City Councilmembers or \$25,000 on behalf of City-wide elected officials. In an unusual move today, the Committee voted two to one to override the earlier Council approval of this provision and raised the Council recusal threshold to \$15,000.

For more information, contact the City Ethics Commission at (213) 978-1960.

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