

Restricting Gifts and Campaign Contributions from Lobbyists*

Digest by the Ballot Simplification Committee

Status: Draft for Consideration

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Members: Packard, Anderson, Fasick, Fraps, Jorgensen

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Deadline to Request Reconsideration: TBD

The Way It Is Now: The City's Lobbyist Ordinance requires local lobbyists to register with the City's Ethics Commission and file monthly reports regarding their activities. When they register, the City does not require them to identify which City agencies they plan to lobby. Among other information, the monthly reports require a lobbyist to disclose the campaign contributions made or delivered by the lobbyist, the lobbyist's employer, or the lobbyist's clients.

With some exceptions, lobbyists cannot provide any City officer with gifts worth more than \$25. Under current law, lobbyists cannot deliver payments or gifts through third-parties to attempt to avoid this gift limit.

The City currently limits campaign contributions any person may make to a City elected official or a candidate for City elective office to \$500. Lobbyists are subject to this same \$500 campaign contribution limit. The City does not restrict anyone, including lobbyists, from collecting campaign contributions from other persons – a practice often referred to as "bundling" – and delivering those contributions to a City elected official or candidate for City elective office.

The Proposal: Proposition ___ would require lobbyists, when they register with the Ethics Commission, to identify which City agencies they plan to lobby. If lobbyists later wish to lobby different agencies, they would have to update their registration with that information.

Proposition ___ would prohibit lobbyists from providing gifts of any value to any City officers. But nonprofit organizations that are lobbyists would be able to provide gifts of food or refreshments worth \$25 or less to City officers, if the nonprofit organization offers such gifts to everyone attending a public event that the organization is hosting. Also, the measure would clarify that lobbyists cannot use third-parties to attempt to avoid these gift limits.

Proposition ___ would also prohibit a lobbyist from making campaign contributions to a City elected official or bundling contributions for the official, if the lobbyist was registered to lobby the official's agency within the previous 90 days.

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want to:

- require lobbyists to identify which City agencies they plan to lobby and update that information;
- generally prohibit lobbyists from providing gifts of any value to City officers; and
- prohibit any lobbyist from making campaign contributions to a City elected official or bundling contributions for the official, if the lobbyist was registered to lobby the official's agency within the previous 90 days.

A "NO" Vote Means: If you vote "no," you do not want to make these changes.

**Working title, for identification only. The Director of Elections determines the title of each local ballot measure; measure titles are not considered during Ballot Simplification Committee meetings.*