



Summary of Prohibitions on Campaign Contributions by City and State Governments

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March 22, 2022

This research paper summarizes the laws enacted by city and state governments to prohibit a campaign contribution to either an official or candidate seeking an office from an entity that is either regulated or contracted by the official or office. This research is illustrative, but not exhaustive of all current laws prohibiting campaign contributions.

Los Angeles City Council enacted a ban on campaign contributions from city lobbyists and certain city contractors and developers. Specifically, the ban affects contributions from any applicant for a “Significant Planning Entitlement” under the city’s ordinances- basically certain land uses that require discretionary city action that “are not solely ministerial.” The ban applies not only to applicants, but also to any property owner identified on the application and any of the applicant’s “principals.” Developers and individuals covered by the ban are prohibited from making such contributions beginning from the time an application for a “Significant Planning Entitlement” is first submitted until 12 months after the date a letter of determination is issued by the city or the date when a final decision is made on the application. See LAMC § 49.7.37(A)(6), Los Angeles Charter § 470(c)(11).

The San Francisco Ethics Commission provides that no person who contracts with the City, the Unified School District, or the Community College District may make any contribution to an officer who must approve the contract, or to a candidate for the board on which the officer serves, at any time from the submission of the proposal for such contract until either the termination of negotiations for such contract or twelve months have elapsed from the date the contract is approved by the officer or board on which he or she serves. See San Francisco Campaign and Governmental Conduct Code § 1.126.

The City of Chicago Governmental Ethics Ordinance provides that “No person who has done business with the city, or with the Chicago Transit Authority, Board of Education, Chicago Park District, Chicago City Colleges, or Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority within the

preceding four reporting years or is seeking to do business with the city, or with any of the other aforementioned entities, and no lobbyist registered with the board of ethics shall make contributions in an aggregate amount exceeding \$1,500.00: (1) to any candidate for city office during a single candidacy; or (2) to an elected official of the government of the city during any reporting year of his term; or (3) to any official or employee of the city who is seeking election to any other office.” See Municipal Code of Chicago § 2-156-445.

Campaign donations from developers to elected officials in Cincinnati have been under scrutiny, and a panel has been tasked with suggesting reforms. A public forum took place, where reform similar in nature to those mentioned above were viewed favorably. See *City of Cincinnati Economic Development Reform Panel* (<https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/council/economic-development-reform-panel/>), (<https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/council/economic-development-reform-panel/june-18-2021-meeting-packet/edrp-panel-member-suggestions-6-18-21/>).

Georgia prohibits contributions to candidates for state Executive branch offices from entities (and any persons or PACs acting on their behalf) that are licensed or regulated by an elected Executive branch official or a board under the jurisdiction of such an official. See GA Code § 21-5-30.1

Mississippi prohibits campaign contributions to state Public Service Commission candidates and employees from businesses regulated by the agency and from certain affiliated individuals. See MS Code § 77-1-11.

New Jersey broadly prohibits political contributions from companies involved in banking, railroad, telephone, gas, electric, canal, aqueduct, and casino businesses, among others, as well as from certain affiliated entities and individuals. See NJ Rev Stat § 19:34-45.

New York prohibits public utilities from using “revenues received from the rendition of public service within the state” to make political contributions. See NY Elec L § 14-116.