

COGEL NEWS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Ethics | 1 |
| Lobbying | 2 |
| Elections | 2 |
| Freedom of Information | 3 |
| Campaign Finance | 3 |

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Recent News

• *Ethics*

CANADA—An article in the *National Post* says that embattled former Senator Mike Duffy has filed a required disclosure which would allow him to return to the Senate next year.

CANADA—This *National Post* article reports that federal ethics commissioner Mary Dawson has told Liberal house leader Dominic LeBlanc that he is required to avoid participating in any decisions involving the Irving family of New Brunswick.

LOS ANGELES—The *LA Times* reports that the former Sheriff of Los Angeles County pleaded guilty to lying to federal investigators in connection with an investigation of the county jail. Related articles: Former LA Sheriff will get to [keep his pension](#) even if he goes to jail for lying and recorded interview reveals that the [former Sheriff lied](#) to federal investigators.

NEW YORK—The *New York Times* is reporting that the Joint Commission on Public Ethics has recently adopted new fundraising and disclosure rules.

NEW YORK—*WHEC Rochester* reports that three government watchdog groups have said that Governor Cuomo is not doing enough to address Albany’s corruption problem.

NEW YORK—An article in the *Gotham Gazette* says that the underfunded New York City Conflict of Interest Board is struggling to meet its mandates.

TEXAS—The *Texas Tribune* reports on recent arrests of most of the elected officials in Crystal City, Texas.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—This *Federal News Radio* story reports on the United States Office of Governmental Ethics and its planned training program for the transition following the 2016 election.

If your agency, law firm, or organization is not a COGEL member, please consider joining. COGEL membership gives you immediate access to your professional counterparts throughout the U.S. and Canada, including an amazing annual conference. Get more information [here](#)

If there’s action in your jurisdiction, and you want your COGEL colleagues to know about it, please send a link to [John Schaaf](#) or [Jennifer Hardin](#), who compile the COGEL News.

- *Lobbying*

UNITED STATES—A *Public Integrity* article states that, amid federal gridlock, lobbying is rising in the states.

SCOTLAND—*CommonSpace* reports that campaigners in Scotland have scored a victory by convincing the government to close lobbying transparency loopholes.

LOS ANGELES—An article in the *Los Angeles Times* states that weak laws allow companies, labor groups, and other special interest groups to conceal how they spend money trying to influence state government and that the amount of lobbying done undercover is growing.

- *Elections*

UNITED STATES—According to *Public Integrity*, President Obama's FY 2017 budget calls for a modest increase in the budget of the Federal Election Commission.

UNITED STATES—The *Brennan Center* reports that redistricting reform is gaining momentum in 2016.

ALABAMA—The *Montgomery Advertiser* reports that Alabama voters can now register to vote online.

KANSAS—From the *LJWorld*, minority groups in Kansas push for same-day voter registration.

MARYLAND—*The Washington Post* reports that the former prisoners who are on probation or parole will be able to register to vote in Maryland after the state Senate overrode the Governor's veto of a 2015 voting-rights bill.

NORTH CAROLINA—From the *Winston Salem Journal*, the federal trial on North Carolina's photo ID law for voters has concluded and the decision is now up to the judge. Also from the *Journal*, North Carolina will have two primary elections as a result of the judges' decision on lawsuits challenging the state's 2011 redistricting. The North Carolina redistricting saga is also discussed here: *Reuters*, *NC Policy Watch*, and *Christian Science Monitor*.

WISCONSIN—*Wisconsin Public Radio* reports that the Wisconsin Senate has okayed online voter registration.



COGEL offers its thanks, on behalf of the membership, to [State and Federal Communications](#) for the many services it provides to COGEL. Included among those is “[News You Can Use](#),” a valuable compilation of ethics and campaign finance news, which is made available to all COGEL members on the COGEL Web site.

- *Freedom of Information*

UNITED STATES—This article in *Governing* describes the increasing number of technology firms offering digital solutions designed specifically for government.

UNITED STATES—The *Washington Post* reports that many state legislatures exempt themselves from public records laws. Also in Sunshine Week news, [Maine's Senate](#) passes a resolution affirming open government.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The [Roll Call](#) blog is reporting that a recent internal server error in the US House of Representatives computer system has raised questions about efficiency and security of the tech system used by the House.

- *Campaign Finance*

CANADA—According to the *National Post*, the Liberal party has surpassed the Tories in fundraising.

UNITED STATES—Dave Levinthal of the Center for Public Integrity, writing in *Time Magazine*, reports that three of the nation's leading trade associations are advising their members not to provide more information about their political activity if the information is requested.

UNITED STATES—The [Brennan Center for Justice](#) is reporting that more candidates are claiming anti-establishment status.

KENTUCKY—[Kentucky.com](#) is reporting about a bill to boost campaign donations that has just passed the House.