

COGEL NEWS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

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

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Recent News

- *Campaign Finance*

UNITED STATES—A *New York Times* op-ed asks whether anything can be done about all of the money in politics.

UNITED STATES—A recent [Brennan Center for Justice report](#) discusses targeted measures to strengthen political parties that could produce more inclusive and transparent politics.

NEW MEXICO—This *New Mexico Political Report* discusses two state representatives who are facing scrutiny over alleged improprieties in their campaign finance reports.

- *Elections*

UNITED STATES—This article on the [Pew Trust Stateline blog](#) reports that at least five states are considering moving redistricting authority from legislators to commissions in order to resolve ongoing court disputes over redistricting.

UNITED STATES—From *Huffington Post*, this article about a [Brennan Center for Justice report](#) on the America’s voting machines and their effect on elections.

CALIFORNIA—This *Washington Post* opinion piece reports that California is making it easier for citizens to votes and asks why other states aren’t.

IOWA—The *Waterloo Cedar Falls Courier* reports that online voter registration will be available in Iowa in January 2016.

KANSAS—From the *Wichita Eagle*, the Kansas Secretary of State’s office has published a new voter registration rule.

LOUISIANA—The *New Orleans Times Picayune* reports that almost half of Louisiana’s lawmakers are automatically re-elected, without having to campaign, because they face no opponents.

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, this year in Boston from December 6 through 9. 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.

- *Ethics*

CANADA—This *National Post* article reports that Mary Dawson, Canada's Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner, has found a former Conservative aide to be in violation of the Conflict of Interest Act for working for a company that previously lobbied him.

CANADA—The *CBC* reports that Conservative Leader Stephen Harper is defending his decision to appoint the embattled Mike Duffy as Senator for Prince Edward Island.

GHANA—According to the *BBC*, Ghana's judicial council will start an inquiry into corruption in its judiciary following a two-year investigation by journalist Anas Aremeyaw Anas. Anas's investigation alleges that 34 judges have taken bribes or extorted money.

UNITED STATES—The Hill's Roll Call Blog has several reports [[this one](#), [this one](#), and [also this one](#)] about the ongoing kerfuffle over a recent congressional trip to Azerbaijan, noted in the last issue of the *COGEL News*.

INDIANA—The *Indianapolis Star* reports that a vendor of the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles has fired two employees amid an ethics probe.

MICHIGAN—The *Detroit Free Press* reports on the resignation of Todd Courser and expulsion of Cindy Gamrat from the Michigan House of Representatives. Other *Free Press* articles on the Courser and Gamrat experience can be found [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

NEW YORK—The *New York Times* reports that leaders of the Moreland Commission, a state anti-corruption commission formed by Governor Andrew Cuomo in 2013, felt that Cuomo and his staff intervened in the commission's work before Cuomo abruptly disbanding it.

- *Freedom of Information*

UNITED STATES—The *New York Times* reports that Apple and other tech firms are sparring with the US over access to data.

TEXAS—According to this *Governing* article, the Texas Attorney General condones the Governor's use of private email for public business.



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.

- *Lobbying*

UNITED STATES—This article from *Global Policy* discusses [a new report](#) on the power of the pharmaceutical lobby in the European Union and its implications on public health.

UNITED STATES—This *Government Executive* article discusses a report by the Inspector General for the General Services Administration about a government employee who collected a six-figure salary while working only four hours each week. The IG found that a registered lobbyist, who was also the Executive Director for the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad, earned \$143,000 a year (nearly one-quarter of the Commission's annual budget) for his work at the Commission. He allegedly also conducted his lobbying business from his federal office using federal resources.

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