

# GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## Executive Office of the Mayor

### Office of Communications



## Fact Sheet: Mayor Gray's Campaign Finance Reform Proposal

Mayor Gray's proposed bill would substantially strengthen existing laws and enforcement mechanisms that govern campaign finance in general. The legislation also would combat the perception of potentially corrupting "pay-to-play" practices in the District by severing the connection between political contributions and high-value grants or contracts and between bundled contributions by lobbyists and access to public officials. The draft legislation's key changes would, among other things:

- Prohibit those possessing or seeking large grants or contracts from the District from directly or indirectly making political contributions to any public official or candidate who could influence contract or grant decisions, while still allowing family members of contractors to make modest contributions to political candidates of their choice;
- Penalize public officials who solicit or receive contributions from those who seek or hold large District contracts or grants;
- Prohibit lobbyists from bundling contributions;
- Promote transparency by requiring reasonable, prompt, and substantial electronic disclosure of contributions or expenditures;
- Prohibit any money-order contributions over \$25;
- Abide by First Amendment restrictions by providing that, while committees that do not coordinate with any public official or candidate or with anyone acting on behalf of a public official or candidate are not subject to limitations on the contributions they may receive, they must disclose information concerning their donors and any affiliates. They also must certify that the contributions they receive and the expenditures they make have not been controlled or directed by any public official or candidate, by any committee affiliated with a public official or candidate, or by any political party;
- Increase the burden on candidates to insure that their campaigns and donors comply with campaign finance laws and regulations; and
- Provide for robust enforcement of the law by enhancing existing civil penalties, by ensuring that both the D.C. Office of the Attorney General and the U.S. Attorney have broad authority to prosecute criminal violations.

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