



**NEWS FROM:  
THE JOINT COMMISSION ON PUBLIC ETHICS**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**JOINT COMMISSION ON PUBLIC ETHICS RECOMMENDS REFORMS  
INCLUDING EXPANDING DISCLOSURE OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS'  
PRIVATE CLIENTS AND ALL POLITICAL CONSULTING AND  
FUNDRAISING BY LOBBYISTS**

**JCOPE's Comprehensive Review Of Ethics And Lobbying Regulation In New York State  
Includes Recommendations That Give The Public More Information About JCOPE  
Investigations and Improves Government Accountability**

Albany – (Feb. 2, 2015) – The New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics today released a comprehensive report containing numerous proposed reforms to State ethics and lobbying laws, as well as to the Commission's own operations, meant to increase transparency, enhance the accountability of public officials and those seeking to influence government decisions, and build public confidence in State government.

The [report](#) culminates a review of the Commission's own work, that of its predecessors, and the effectiveness of the current state ethics laws and regulations. As required under the law creating the Joint Commission, the report has been delivered to the Governor and Legislature for their review and consideration.

“The cornerstone of an effective government is accountability to the public,” said Commission Chair Daniel J. Horwitz. “To that end, the Commission has proposed significant reforms that will increase transparency, enhance oversight, and thereby build the public's confidence in its government.”

Several of the Commission's proposals, including legislative recommendations, are outlined below. All are discussed more thoroughly in the report.

- Require lobbyists to disclose political consulting or fundraising activities.

- Remove the legal impediments (requirement of confidentiality) to allow the Commission to make more information public, especially the ability to make investigative findings public when no legal violation is found or when the Commission determines not to investigate certain matters.
- Require expanded disclosure by public officials and employees of their private clients who have business before the State.
- Expand the Joint Commission on Public Ethics' jurisdiction to allow it to adjudicate allegations of wrongdoing involving officials and employees in both the executive and legislative branches. Currently, allegations of wrongdoing involving a member of the legislative branch must be adjudicated by the Legislative Ethics Commission.
- Authorize the Commission to bring accomplice liability cases under State ethics and lobbying laws.
- Prohibit lobbying entities or coalitions from creating or participating in "shell" or "pass-through" entities to avoid disclosing their funding sources.
- Require that all filings by lobbyists and their clients be submitted electronically.
- Require that all annual financial disclosure forms required of public officials and others be submitted electronically.
- Authorize the Commission to ban from lobbying those who commit repeated violations of the Lobbying Act, fail to pay a fine, or refuse to cooperate with an audit.

The report reflects the findings of the Commission and may be viewed by clicking [here](#).