

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Limit the Influence of Lobbyists by Expanding the Prohibition on Accepting Political Contributions

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 1 MRSA §1015, sub-§3, as amended by PL 2009, c. 286, §1, is further amended to read:

3. Campaign contributions and solicitations prohibited. The following provisions prohibit certain campaign contributions and solicitation of campaign contributions ~~during a legislative session.~~

A. As used in this subsection, the terms "employer," "lobbyist" and "lobbyist associate" have the same meanings as in Title 3, section 312-A. As used in this subsection, "contribution" has the same meaning as in Title 21-A, section 1012 and includes seed money contributions as defined in Title 21-A, section 1122, subsection 9.

B. The Governor, a member of the Legislature or any constitutional officer or the staff or agent of the Governor, a member of the Legislature or any constitutional officer may not intentionally solicit or accept a contribution from a lobbyist, lobbyist associate or employer ~~during any period of time in which the Legislature is convened before final adjournment~~, except for a qualifying contribution as defined under Title 21-A, section 1122, subsection 7. A lobbyist, lobbyist associate or employer may not intentionally give, offer or promise a contribution, other than a qualifying contribution, to the Governor, a member of the Legislature or any constitutional officer or the staff or agent of the Governor, a member of the Legislature or any constitutional officer ~~during any time in which the Legislature is convened before final adjournment~~. These prohibitions apply to contributions directly and indirectly solicited or accepted by, or given, offered and promised to a political action committee, ballot question committee or party committee of which the Governor, a member of the Legislature, a constitutional officer or the staff or agent of these officials is a treasurer, officer or primary fundraiser or decision maker.

C. This subsection does not apply to:

- (1) Solicitations or contributions for bona fide social events hosted for nonpartisan, charitable purposes;
- (2) Solicitations or contributions relating to a special election to fill a vacancy from the time of announcement of the election until the election; and
- (4) Solicitations or contributions accepted by a member of the Legislature supporting that member's campaign for federal office.

C-1. This subsection does not prohibit the attendance of the Governor, a member of the Legislature or any constitutional officer or the staff or agent of the Governor, a member of the Legislature or any constitutional officer at fund-raising events held by a municipal, county, state or national political party organized pursuant to Title 21-A, chapter 5, nor the advertisement of the expected presence of any such official at any such event, as long as any such official has no involvement in soliciting attendance at the event and all proceeds are paid directly to the political party organization hosting the event or a nonprofit charitable organization.

D. A person who intentionally violates this subsection is subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$1,000, payable to the State and recoverable in a civil action.

SUMMARY

Current law prohibits the Governor, members of the Legislature, constitutional officers and the staff or agents of the Governor, members of the Legislature and constitutional officers from soliciting or accepting contributions from a lobbyist, lobbyist associate or employer while the Legislature is convened in session. This bill extends application of that prohibition year-round, regardless of whether the Legislature is in session.