
COUNCILMAN GOODIN'S ANTI-CORRUPTION PLAN

Cincinnati City Council made history this term with four of its members facing criminal indictments. Three of these charges involved allegations of quid pro quo corruption of the worst kind – selling votes for cash.

If we are to end the culture of corruption at City Hall, we must root out its systemic causes and place the long-term public interest above short-term political gain.

BAN CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THOSE WITH BUSINESS BEFORE THE CITY

More than half our state legislatures and many of larger cities ban contributions from individuals with pending government business. Even if there is no explicit quid pro quo, the appearance of one undermines the public trust. If we are to restore faith in the impartiality of City decisions, we must take enact a categorical ban on these kind of donations.

MANDATE SEARCHABLE CAMPAIGN FINANCE FILINGS The fact that Cincinnati campaign finance reports are not available on a searchable database remains one of the great outrages in Cincinnati politics. If sunlight is truly the best disinfectant, then City residents should be able to search for political donors in real time. The Mayor, councilmembers and all candidates for these offices should be required to file on-line with the Ohio Secretary of State's Office, which allows for searches by donor.

BAN DARK MONEY AND LEADERSHIP PACS Many of our recent troubles stem from the use of dark money organizations and "leadership PACs." These organizations allow candidates and office-holders to make a mockery of our campaign finance laws. We must outlaw the use of these organizations in city races in the name of transparency and good government.

ENACT REAL LOBBYING REFORM Without question, City Hall has its own version of the Washington D.C. "swamp." We must follow other states and municipalities which have increased transparency around their budget processes. That means "revolving door" reforms preventing City Hall staffers from immediately lobbying their former colleagues. And it means enhanced lobbyist registration requirements. We must impose a "revolving door" requirement on former city aides who immediately return to lobby their former bosses and colleagues.

AMEND THE ISSUE 2 CHARTER AMENDMENT I respect the will of the voters who enacted Issue 2 (the "Councilmember suspension" Charter amendment). It is that same respect for the voters which compels me to call for changes to its language. As we learned during City Council's first attempt to remove an indicted Councilmember, it fails to anticipate situations in which the indictment involves a minor offense which does not relate to pay-to-play corruption. It also fails to address the inherent conflict of the Councilmember designated to pick a replacement. These issues should be addressed before removing a Councilmember who has been elected by tens of thousands of Cincinnati voters.