

# NC COALITION *for* LOBBYING & GOVERNMENT REFORM

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**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Election Surprise Gubernatorial Candidates Agree – Time to get Special Interest Money Out of Politics**

The “attack” ads on TV prove that the eight gubernatorial candidates don’t agree on much. In an “election surprise”, they do agree that special interest money is a problem in NC government and politics. All eight agree that the citizens of North Carolina should know who is raising big money for candidates by bundling a number of contributions. Seven of the eight candidates, responding to a survey from the North Carolina Coalition for Lobbying and Government Reform, said that lobbyists should not be involved in raising money for candidates for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Council of State or the North Carolina General Assembly.

“The candidates understand that North Carolinians have seen enough news stories about elected and appointed officials and money. They know that citizens are tired of feeling that too much happens behind closed doors and that it is time for openness and transparency “, stated Jane Pinsky, Director of the North Carolina Coalition for Lobbying Reform. “ Citizens need to know that policy is made without the taint of influence peddling.”

All of the eight support creating a requirement that anyone raising over \$10,000 for a candidate disclose from whom they raised the money and how much it was. The practice known as “bundling” has been an issue in the Governor’s race. Too, there has been concern about the appointment of major fundraisers to the Board of Transportation. A majority opposed allowing legislators from soliciting lobbyists for charities and non-profit organizations. Their concern was the appearance of Elected officials feeling as if they “owed” a lobbyist for something.

“North Carolina has made dramatic progress in toughening our state’s lobbying and ethics laws in recent years, but there’s still much more work to do, says Jane Pinsky, Director of the NC Lobbying and Government Reform Coalition. “More sunshine, better rules and more education will continue to

help improve the lobbying and ethics process, which is needed to restore public confidence in government.

The results will be sent media across the state, posted on the Coalition's website, [www.nclobbyreform.org](http://www.nclobbyreform.org), distributed by coalition members who will then share it with their members, and circulated at public events throughout the state. It hopes that voters will consider the candidates opinions before they go to their voting places on May 6<sup>th</sup>.

The coalition has taken a position on the five questions it asked the candidates. The coalition:

- Supports restricting lobbyists from raising unlimited amounts of money for candidates.
- Supports restricting lawmakers from soliciting money from lobbyists for a charity
- Supports prohibiting lobbyists from serving on their clients' political action committees.
- Supports sunshine on big fundraisers – identify all individuals raising more than \$10,000
- Supports restricting political parties from providing unlimited amounts of money to candidates

The NC Coalition for Lobbying & Government Reform is a non-partisan non-profit organization dedicated to promoting good-government policies that level the playing field for the citizens of North Carolina. The Coalition membership includes groups as diverse as the John Locke Foundation, NC Policy Watch, AARP, NC Family Council and the NC AFL -CIO.

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