



*Helping achieve an open and accountable government*

April 15, 2016

Senator Ben Allen, Chair  
Senate Standing Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments  
State Capitol, Room 2203  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Cc: The Honorable Andy Vidak and Members of the Senate Elections Committee

**RE: SB 976 (Vidak) – Extending Lobbying Ban for Ex-Lawmakers - SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Allen,

The California Clean Money Campaign is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that has been working on the problems of money in politics in California for more than 14 years, with more than 150,000 supporters across the state who care deeply about improving California's campaign finance system.

On behalf of the California Clean Money Campaign, I am writing this letter of support for SB 976, which would extend the current one-year ban on ex-legislators becoming lobbyists until the end of the next legislative session that begins after the legislator leaves office. It similarly extends the lobbying limitations for former elected statewide officers.

In recent years, several legislators have left office in the middle of their term to take government affairs positions with big business. This is a major disruption of California's legislature because the abandoned seats remain open for many months until expensive and low-turnout special elections can be held. Worse, this practice might raise questions in the public's mind about whether the legislator's plan to leave office early and take a corporate position might have influenced their legislative positions and actions.

According to the National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL), 11 states currently ban former members from lobbying for two years after leaving the legislature, and 2 states (Maryland and Oregon) require former members to wait until the conclusion of the next legislative session before they can engage in lobbying.

Although there are many legitimate reasons for leaving office early, elected officials who do so should not benefit by becoming paid lobbyists earlier than their colleagues who serve out their full terms. We therefore believe that California should follow Maryland and Oregon's lead by requiring former members to wait until the conclusion of the next legislative session before lobbying, and so respectfully request your "Aye" vote on SB 976.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trent Lange". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Trent Lange  
President, California Clean Money Campaign

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**California Clean Money Campaign**

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