

# Changes in the States: Kentucky, Oklahoma and Idaho

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July 2008

## **Kentucky Governor Issues Order on Executive Branch Ethics**

Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear signed an executive order on May 27, 2008, that, among other things, makes 74 state agencies, boards, and commissions subject to the state's gift and conflict of interest rules. Among the newly covered agencies are the Higher Education Student Loan Corporation, the Teachers' Retirement System Board of Trustees, and the Kentucky Housing Corporation Board of Directors.

In addition, the executive order bars executive branch officials and employees from negotiating for future employment with a person or entity that does business with or is regulated by the agency for which the official or employee works if that official or employee is directly involved in matters involving the potential future employer.

## **Oklahoma Lowers Gift Limit and Reporting Threshold**

Effective July 1, the Oklahoma State Ethics Commission lowered to \$100 the aggregate annual gift limit applicable to elective state officers and their families. The limit had previously been \$300 per year.

Moreover, through its annual changes, the Commission also lowered the threshold for itemization by lobbyists on their lobbying reports. Ten dollars is now the threshold at which lobbyists must itemize things of value provided to elected state officials, state employees, and non-elective state officials (and their families).

## **Idaho Adjusts Its Lobbying and Gift Laws**

Through SB 1446 passed earlier this year, Idaho amended its lobbying and gift rules on July 1. Three of the changes are discussed below.

First, the state expanded its definition of lobbying to include goodwill lobbying, a concept that, by statutory terms, encompasses the entertainment of executive and legislative branch officials.

Second, in addition to other reporting changes, the state moved the deadline for monthly lobbyist reports due during the session. Such reports are now due on the 15th day of the next month instead of the 10th day.

Finally, Idaho amended its general gift rule to cover executive branch officials as well as legislative officials, although the legislature also created an exception for "benefits received as a result of lobbying activities."