

# California Senate Strengthens Ethics Rules

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July 2014

In multiple resolutions passed in early June, the California Senate amended its rules with respect to ethics. One resolution creates an Ethics Ombudsman, who will be responsible for receiving information on ethics complaints and ensuring that whistleblowers are protected from retaliation with respect to employment. The ombudsman will refer certain complaints, especially those involving repeated ethics violations, to the Senate Committee on Legislative Ethics or Rules Committee.

Another resolution prohibits Senators from accepting contributions from lobbyist employers during certain timeframes when a budget bill is being considered and when the legislative session is coming to an end. This resolution notes that disciplinary action may be taken against Senators who violate the ban on accepting contributions during these periods.

## Authors

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Karen E. Trainer  
Senior Reporting Specialist  
202.719.4078  
ktrainer@wiley.law