

Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼

RSS

CPA Launches New Report and Initiative

[View this email in your browser](#)



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Contact:

Bruce F. Freed, [bffreed@politicalaccountability.net](mailto:bffreed@politicalaccountability.net)

202-464-14570 Ext. 102 (o), 301-233-3621 (c)

## Report: In Polarized Times, Companies Face Heightened Risks from Political Spending

*'Collision Course' Launches Educational Initiative on Political Expenditures That May Conflict With Company Core Values*

**WASHINGTON** – U.S. companies face a heightened, dangerous risk to their reputations and brands when they spend money to influence elections in today's polarized political environment, warns a new report issued by the Center for Political Accountability.

“At the intersection of business and politics in America, a new era has dawned, bringing hyper-charged, partisan and passionate division over political and social issues to the fore. The warp-like speed of digital news and social media inflames passions. In this fraught climate, and ahead of this fall's mid-term elections, corporations are in the crosshairs,” the Center's report states.

The report launches a new CPA educational initiative centered around corporate political risk that will kick off Friday June 22<sup>nd</sup> with a major program. It will be followed by events reaching out to corporate and academic communities, among others.

Entitled “Collision Course,” the report spotlights a particular, widely overlooked threat: Unintended, damaging consequences can occur when a company’s political spending helps fuel a policy outcome that clashes with the company’s core values.

“Companies that spend to influence elections are at a tipping point,” the report states. “In today’s highly volatile environment, corporations are vulnerable to serious risk if political contributions or their outcomes, or both, are perceived to be at odds with their core values. This can affect a company’s relationship with customers, employees and communities in which it located.”

CPA’s report focuses on instances of unwanted publicity and accusations of hypocrisy for dozens of leading U.S. companies in the wake of their political expenditures totaling in the millions. These instances have involved such issues as LGBT rights, racial gerrymandering, reproductive rights and President Donald Trump’s withdrawal of the United States from the Paris climate accord.

The report suggests detailed ways that companies can manage the risks of political spending, including disclosure of their political donations and trade association payments, and broader oversight of -- and policies for -- political spending. It is entitled “Collision Course: The Risks Companies Face When Their Political Spending and Core Values Conflict and How to Address Them.”

“We hope to provide companies a timely resource,” said CPA President Bruce Freed. “Every day, companies are asked to take a stand on matters of civic and public policy engagement. Meanwhile there’s heightened scrutiny, coming from consumers, shareholders, activists, social and mainstream media and a tweeting U.S. chief executive.

“The high stakes of the mid-term elections are making the current environment even more incendiary,” Freed added. “If you have any doubts, just consider the firestorm around Publix Super Markets’ bankrolling a political candidate in Florida. Activists mobilized. Publix did a rapid turnabout.”

At a time when Americans’ trust in business and other core institutions has declined, there are concrete ways for businesses to regain public trust, the report contends. It recommends companies adopt and carry out strong corporate governance policies and practices for participating in the political process and consider the wider consequences of their spending.

“Collision Course” is available by clicking [here](#). CPA is a non-profit, non-partisan organization created in November 2003 to bring transparency and accountability to corporate political spending. The center and its partner organizations have worked successfully to persuade numerous publicly held corporations to adopt transparency and accountability as a mainstream practice.

###



---

*Copyright © 2018 Center for Political Accountability, All rights reserved.*

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)

MailChimp