

Jindal Suffers Surprising Setback

Posted by [jcrouere](#) January 25, 2008 12:21PM

January 25, 2008...There is little doubt that one of the biggest problems that Louisiana faces involves our corrupt image. Currently, the former Governor of Louisiana is in jail and almost every day one politician or another is being indicted or convicted of serious crimes. Just this week, a former legislator, Charles Jones of Monroe, who served as chairman of a Senate committee that handled ethics, was indicted on federal tax charges. The image and reality of political corruption in Louisiana needs to be addressed very quickly. It is harming the state in innumerable ways, including serving as a roadblock to our economic growth. Many business leaders are understandably wary of bringing jobs and economic development to our state. Therefore, it is refreshing that new Governor Bobby Jindal is convening a special legislative session dedicated to ethics reform.

Yet, just as Governor Jindal is gearing up for this special session, it was revealed that his gubernatorial campaign violated campaign finance laws. The Louisiana Board of Ethics disclosed that a violation occurred when the Jindal campaign failed to disclose over \$100,000 in in-kind contributions from the Louisiana Republican Party. The state party conducted an extensive mail campaign on behalf of Jindal in June.

According to a spokeswoman for Governor Jindal, he will pay a \$2,500 fine, thus avoiding a hearing on the issue. The campaign's accountant William Potter claims that it was just an error. "We are not trying to deny anything," he said.

It seems that the mistake was really made by Jindal campaign Chief Timmy Teepell, who was aware of the in-kind contribution from the state party but failed to notify campaign accountants. The violation involves \$118,264 in mail expenses that should have been reported in July 23 campaign report, but was not noted until a September 7 amended report.

The amended report was made once a complaint was filed by a New Orleans educator with ties to the Democratic Party. Initially, the Jindal campaign believed that the expenses would only have to be reported by the Louisiana Republican Party; however, since Teepell discussed the expenditures with the LA GOP, it should have also been reported by the campaign. The donation was initially reported by the Louisiana Republican Party and then later reported by Jindal, although belatedly. Potter admits a mistake was made, saying that "I feel that we let Bobby down on this. He wanted 100 percent reported straight forward."

Jindal is doing the responsible thing by admitting the violation and paying the \$2,500 fine. This will avoid the spectacle of an ethics hearing and further embarrassment. Paying the fine now should end the matter relatively quickly and allow the Governor to focus on his ethics reform agenda.

This revelation is not a major infringement and issuing a fine for a campaign finance reporting violation occurs very often in Louisiana politics. For example, former Senator Jones was fined twice in recent years for his reporting violations and he is certainly not alone among legislators.

Nevertheless, the timing of this violation is unhelpful for Jindal, as he prepares to lead a special session dedicated to ethics reform. His critics will point to this as an indication that Jindal is not following the "gold standard" that he promised to set in Louisiana regarding ethics.

This incident clearly shows that campaign finance reform needs to be included in the agenda for the ethics special session. It should not in any way deter Governor Jindal and his supporters from pushing for a very aggressive reform agenda. All aspects of the political system in Louisiana need to be reformed. The changes should be widespread and far reaching and the reforms should apply to every politician in Louisiana, starting

at the top.

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Comments

snewman66 says...

Everyone knows that Bobby ran on a ethics reform platform. Although I wasn't a supporter of his, the average person knows that one who runs such a campaign so fervently on ethics has to know that he would not have knowingly broken the law. There will be nay-sayers who will try to make an issue of this. Leave it alone. This is coming from a conservative democrat. Bet you would have never imagined that "conservative" and "democrat" could be use in a sentence. I just did it.

Posted on 01/25/08 at 12:44PM

adieu22 says...

Great. We have a new Governor who ran on "ethics" who is now guilty of breaking ethics rules and a new AG who ran on "integrity,legal expertise,etc." who is dropping cases based on who his political friends are and not legal merits. Wondreful. Sounds like more of the same ol.

Posted on 01/26/08 at 10:57AM

letsdobetter says...

Jeff Crouere was a big supporter of Aaron BROUSSARD in articles before the election, Let's see how you will stand now. Aren't you good buddies with Greg Buisson, his campaign manager, do you have an office in Jedco Bldg? Wonder if you are part of the problem?????

Posted on 01/27/08 at 8:19PM

StTammanyBoy says...

The more things change, the more they stay the same.

Posted on 01/29/08 at 11:03PM

mpfagan1 says...

Jindal ran on ethics and gets caught in an ethics violation, trying to hide state GOP money being spent in his name. Vitter runs on family values while calling hookers. Maybe the next time the two of them can run for the GOP nomination in 2012 on family values and ethics. A perfect GOP ticket.

We should throw Jindal out now before he can cause any more harm.

Posted on 02/04/08 at 11:13PM

jojo62 says...

More corrupt camp donations for Obama! WHERE'S THE MEDIA??? We are sick of the media pushing Obama down our throats! On Oct. 5, in the aftermath of federal bribery/extortion/conspiracy/other miscellaneous badness indictments of former Dallas Mayor Pro Tem Don Hill, Obama camp supporter and financial contributor to Presidential candidate Barack Obama who desperately wants campaign cash from another, criminal or not, Again Obama camp has its hands full with other publically indicted bankrollers Rezko. Now Mr. Hill's campaign finance report shows donations on April 28, and federal campaign finance reports indicate Mr. Obama received donations in June 22 as well. The Obama camp couldn't immediately be reached for comment Friday...Of course, did Axelrod lose his voice?

Obama's Relationship With Rezko Goes Back 17 Years. Obama Kept Contributions From Accused Fixer's (REZKO) Wife And Others ABCNews.com Analysis Shows the Campaign Still Hasn't Returned More Than \$100,000 in Obama is referred to in document which outlines case against Rezko As Barack Obama is finding out, it's not as easy to dump politically toxic campaign donations as it might seem. For the third time in more than a year, Obama's presidential campaign announced this week it was shedding more donations tied to indicted fundraiser Antoin "Tony" Rezko. Calculations by the media and Obama's own staff of Rezko's financial impact on his past political campaigns have been all over the map and shifting. In the case of Obama, public records don't make clear every Rezko connection. The records show that since 1995, \$74,500 came from Rezko, his relatives or contributors listed on official disclosure forms as employees of one of his businesses. Rezko has raised money for Obama's presidential campaign.

Posted on 02/09/08 at 7:58AM

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Posted on 02/09/08 at 7:58AM

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Obama said he goofed on votes angered fellow Democrats in the Senate when he voted to strip millions of dollars from a child welfare office on Chicago's West Side. But Obama had a ready explanation: He goofed! Also announced he had fumbled an election-reform vote the day before, on a measure that passed 51 to 6.

The next day, he acknowledged voting "present" on a key telecommunications vote. He stood on March 11, 1999, to take back his vote against legislation to end good-behavior credits for certain felons in county jails. "I pressed the wrong button on that," he said. Obama was the lone dissenter on Feb. 24, 2000, against 57 yeas for a ban on human cloning. "I pressed the wrong button by accident," he said.

But two of Obama's bumbles came on more-sensitive topics, he backed legislation to permit riverboat casinos to operate even when the boats were dockside.

The measure, pushed by the gambling industry and fought by church groups whose support Obama was seeking, passed with two "yeas" to spare -- including Obama's. Moments after its passage he rose to say, explaining that he had mistakenly voted for it.

Obama would later develop a reputation as a critic of the gambling industry, and he voted against a similar measure two years later. But he was clearly confused about how to handle the issue at the time of his first vote, telling a church group that he was "undecided" about whether he backed an expansion of riverboat gambling. And, months earlier, he had voted in favor of a version of the bill.

Obama's vote sparked a confrontation after he joined Republicans to block Democrats trying to override a veto by GOP Gov. George Ryan of a \$2-million allotment for the west Chicago child welfare office. "being responsible," said Sen. Rickey Hendon, accusing Obama of voting to close the child welfare office. Obama replied "I understand Sen. Hendon's anger, I was not aware that I had voted no on that piece of legislation.

Posted on 02/09/08 at 7:59AM

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