

Policy Alert

July 10, 2015

U.S. Court Upholds Federal Contractor Campaign Finance Ban

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia rejected a constitutional challenge to the ban on U.S. government contractors making political contributions to candidates for federal office and federal political party committees. The Court in [Wagner v. Federal Election Commission](#) held that the justifications for limitations on campaign contributions—to protect against quid pro quo corruption and its appearance and to protect merit-based awards of federal contracts—remain valid. The 75-year-old ban on contractor contributions prohibits contributions from any person or entity contracting with the federal government, including those from individuals or sole proprietors.

While the case challenged the ban only with respect to contributions from individuals providing services to the government who wished to make contributions to candidates and political parties, government contractors should be aware that the statute covers not only contributions to political parties and candidates for public office, but also contributions to committees or any person for any political purpose. Therefore, with the presidential election season already under way, contractors should remain vigilant.

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