



# NEWS RELEASE

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## PRESS ADVISORY

Executive Director Jeff Brindle appeared today with State Comptroller Matt Boxer at a press conference regarding pay-to-play reform.

A copy of his comments are attached.

Brindle can be reached by calling 609-292-8700.

For more information on reforms proposed by the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission, check the most recent annual report, press releases and newsletters at the Commission's website:

[www.elec.state.nj.us](http://www.elec.state.nj.us).

## **PAY-TO-PLAY CONFERENCE**

**September 15, 2011**

Statement by: Jeff Brindle, Executive Director  
New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission

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I want to thank Comptroller Boxer for inviting me today to participate in this press conference.

On behalf of the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission, I would like to congratulate the Comptroller and his staff for an excellent report and for drawing attention to this glaring weakness in the pay-to-play law.

Without question, the bidding laws need to be strengthened. I would like to express my strong support for the comptroller's recommendation and to call for reforms to be made.

As you may know, ELEC, which primarily is responsible for the disclosure aspect of pay-to-play, has called for a series of changes to the law.

First, the bipartisan Commission has called for one state law to apply across the board. This would simplify matters greatly. The current maze of local and state laws is terribly confusing.

Second, the Commission has called for an end to the "fair and open" loophole.

Third, we propose that any public contractor receiving a contract over \$17,500 file an annual report with our agency that lists their contributions and public contracts. The current disclosure threshold is \$50,000 in contracts statewide.

Finally, we believe that the contribution limits for contractors should be raised modestly to help address fundraising concerns. What we don't want is to discourage participation in the process, either through making contributions or otherwise.

Combined with competitive bidding reform as suggested by the Comptroller, together these changes would, I believe, constitute the strongest pay-to-play law in the nation.

Hopefully, by joining forces, the Comptroller's office and ELEC can bring about meaningful reform in this vital area.

Unfortunately, New Jersey's political history is littered with examples of private contractors securing lucrative public contracts through targeted contributions.

Tighter contracting rules, a simpler pay-to-play system and more complete disclosure of contributions, particularly by contractors, is critical to deterring this sort of corruption.

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