



Corrupt Politician Protection Act

Over the last few weeks, there have been some startling bills introduced and rushed through the legislative process before the public had a chance to respond. Appalling changes to campaign finance laws would make it easier for politicians to be corrupted, changes to the Government Accountability Board (GAB) would make this corruption harder to investigate, and changes to John Doe investigations make it almost impossible to convict a politician for corruption.

The GAB was created with near-unanimous support, with 130 legislators in favor and 2 against, and is effective. Between 2010 and 2013 the board handled almost 1,900 complaints in a timely manner. Now it will revert to the same format that, just over a decade ago, permitted the heinous caucus scandal, the most shameful abuse of tax-payer money in state history.

Assembly Republicans voted to end John Doe investigations taken out against politicians though they can still be used on regular citizens. Despite the fact that John Doe probes have been proven time and time again to work against both parties, the rules no longer apply for politicians.

Campaign finance regulations could be destroyed. A bill would double some of the donation limits and remove others altogether while dissolving transparency policies. This legislation makes it easier for people and corporations to effectively buy offices for legislators.

The trio of bills have become known colloquially as the Corrupt Politician Protection Act. I voted against the John Doe and GAB bills. The campaign finance bill I recused myself from. The bill, in my opinion, was a conflict of interest for all Assembly members. All three passed out of Assembly with near unanimous Republican support. The John Doe bill has been signed into law while the other two are waiting to be scheduled in the Senate.