

From: McMillan, Bradley [bmcmillan@bumail.bradley.edu]
Sent: Monday, January 26, 2009 1:23 PM
To: Collins, Patrick M. (Perkins Coie)
Subject: RE: Reform Commission

Patrick,

As a follow up to our phone conversation today, last week I was asked by Steve Brown to have coffee to discuss "some ethics reform ideas" that he had. I have never met him before but knew that he worked for Speaker Mike Madigan (Press Secretary). Probably being naive, I said yes because I am willing to listen to anyone with ideas on reform.

At our meeting, we discussed the Illinois Reform Commission. Steve shared his thoughts that the panel had very little real world political experience and "almost none of them had ever written a political campaign check". I told him that while the panel may not be the most experienced politically that it was a very diverse and talented group that was truly independent.

He mentioned that Speaker Madigan knew that we were meeting and wondered if any reasonable agreement on ethics reform could be reached so as to "avoid a direct confrontation." He also made some remarks about Lt. Governor Quinn that were negative.

Steve also had done some research on my campaign for the Illinois Appellate Court (3rd District) and knew that I had taken out a personal loan that was paid back by the generosity of my supporters following my loss in the Republican primary. I think the point he was trying to make is don't change the system because candidates will not be able to afford to run for political office if you limit contributions. In his opinion, the current rules are fine and it is just a few bad apples giving Illinois a bad reputation. I also think he was subtly trying to show that they were looking into the backgrounds of the commissioners. He mentioned Lawrence Oliver serving on the "ethics commission" and questioned why he had not pushed for more enforcement.

Overall, my impression was that he & Madigan wanted to see if there was a way to minimize the reforms recommended so as to avoid a public battle between the Illinois Reform Commission & Quinn and Speaker Madigan.

I told him that it was my opinion that we needed significant & meaningful reform to clean up Illinois politics and government. This included looking at campaign finance reform, redistricting, and limiting the concentration of power in a few hands. This ended our conversation & I paid the bill with my own personal credit card.

Brad