

# MULTISTATE

Lobbying | Tracking | Compliance | Consulting

## [Beyond 'Hamilton,' emails and texts raise questions on Gillum's trips with lobbyists](#)

Andrew Gillum has blamed his meetings with undercover FBI agents on one thing: trusting former lobbyist Adam Corey too much.

"If I had to do it again, I would have been a lot more circumspect about the people who are allowed to be around me and come into my space," the Democratic nominee for Florida governor told Chuck Todd on MSNBC's "Meet the Press Daily" on Tuesday. "But you know what, you live and you learn and you move on."

But records released hours earlier by Corey's lawyer contradict Gillum's portrayal of himself as naive, complicating the Tallahassee mayor's bid for Florida governor and forcing voters to wonder whom to believe.

The records show Gillum knew well in advance that his out-of-state meetings with Corey could help him network with powerful developers, businessmen and lawyers. That included a trip to New York, where he received a "Hamilton" ticket from an undercover FBI agent, and a trip to the tiny Persian Gulf nation of Qatar.

In a June 10, 2016, email, for instance, Gillum asked Corey to make a round of introductions.

"I will be in Miami on Friday, June 17 and am pretty flexible on my scheduling," Gillum wrote. "I am wondering if you have some folks in S. Florida that you think it would be worth me meeting with, politically?"

Corey wrote back: "I have a few young lawyers that have a firm in Miami and Lauderdale and they are expanding to NYC, Dubai, and DC. I want you to meet them."

In the trip to New York, Corey told him he would meeting with local businessmen (undercover FBI agents). And during the trip to Qatar, Gillum ended up socializing with a top Comcast lobbyist.

With less than two weeks before the race between Gillum and Republican Ron DeSantis will be decided, voters are trying to make sense of the last-minute records dump by Corey and his Tallahassee lawyer, Chris Kise. It's highly unlikely that either the FBI investigation or an ethics case will finish before the Nov. 6 election.

Gillum could waive his confidentiality in the ethics case, but his lawyer has advised him not to do it, saying it could expose him to unfounded evidence.

Kise said he released the records after getting a subpoena from the Florida Commission on Ethics, a nine-member Republican controlled board with a staff of about 25 that can recommend penalties for infractions by public officials. The commission is looking into complaints that Gillum did not disclose gifts during trips he made with Corey to New York and Costa Rica.

The ethics investigator requested "all documents or records related to travel of Adam Corey that included Andrew Gillum during 2016." The records Kise released, however, don't include a trip Corey arranged for Gillum in February 2016.

On that trip, Gillum went to Tampa to meet with one of Corey's clients, an affordable housing developer, according to the Tallahassee Democrat. Gillum paid for the trip out of his office account.

Kise said he's still reviewing records Corey gave him and will release those relating to any other trips Gillum and Corey took. Corey, he said is "absolutely not" trying to ruin Gillum's campaign. And Kise, who worked on Gov. Rick Scott's transition team, said he isn't working from any political motive.

"I would direct your attention to the long history of campaign contributions to Adam Putnam," Kise said, referring to the agriculture commissioner, who lost the Republican primary to DeSantis. "The bottom line is, I was a Putnam guy."

Kise noted that he turned over the records to both the Gillum and DeSantis campaigns before sending them to the media.

"We're doing our best to be as nonpartisan as possible under the circumstances," he said.

Kise said the release is meant to show that his client did nothing wrong in his interactions with Gillum, and to deflect criticism that his client is at the center of the FBI's long-running probe in Tallahassee. The investigation has not led to any charges against anyone, and Gillum said he's been assured by agents that he's neither a target nor a focus of the probe.

Last year, after news that three developers who went through Corey to meet with Gillum in Tallahassee and New York were actually undercover FBI agents, Gillum announced he was breaking all contact with Corey. And he publicly wondered whether Corey, his longtime friend, had been knowingly working with the FBI to set him up.

"I had a trusting relationship, and I felt like I allowed people around me who were acquaintances of his because I trusted him," Gillum told the Tallahassee Democrat last year. "And it appears that if these guys were here for an investigation, that the only way they got to me was by leveraging my friendship with Adam."

Gillum was officially in New York City on behalf of the People for the American Way Foundation, a liberal advocacy group that employed him.

But the records indicate Gillum knew in advance that the last part of the trip would be spent with his brother, Corey and at least one of Corey's clients, a developer by the name of "Mike Miller," who was an undercover FBI agent.

The pattern continued in other trips. Mike Miller was invited to a Tallahassee Chamber retreat dinner in August 2016 paid for jointly by Corey and lobbyist Sean Pittman, who is now one of Gillum's top advisers.

The \$5,900 dinner at the Ritz-Carlton on Amelia Island — featuring dinner for 27 and more than \$1,000 in drinks — was cohosted by the two lobbyists. Invitees included Gillum, Gillum's wife, then-state Rep. Alan Williams and Ken Fowler, a Gillum friend.

And during a trip to Dubai that was sponsored by UCLA, Gillum brought Corey along. Emails show that part of the trip was spent with former Comcast lobbyist Rick Smotkin, who drew

media attention earlier this year after it emerged he had helped organize a \$100,000 trip to Morocco for former U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt.

The emails indicate Smotkin might have covered at least part of the trip for Corey.

"Thanks again for a wonderful meal and experience last night," Corey wrote to Smotkin, copying Gillum. "I had a blast!"

Gillum's campaign declined to respond to questions Wednesday on whether anyone other than the event organizers — including Smotkin — had paid for Gillum's meals or hotel stay in Dubai.

"This trip has been reported on before," campaign spokesman Geoff Burgan said, "and with 13 days left in the election, this partisan witch hunt, led by one of Rick Scott's former political appointees, is becoming a sideshow. The Mayor paid for his own roundtrip flight to Dubai."

Whether the controversy swirling around the case will matter to voters is another question. Floridians voted twice for Scott despite his connection to the largest Medicare fraud in U.S. history at the time. And DeSantis also faced an ethics complaint this year over a condo he rented from a campaign donor. DeSantis resigned from Congress before the case was resolved.

Attorney Barry Richard, who is representing Gillum in his ethics case, noted that nobody is accusing Gillum of doing special favors for Miller or Corey.

"This whole thing, all of these documents, are fully consistent with what he's been saying," Richard said. "The whole thing, frankly, from a political standpoint, is kind of silly."

---

### **[Former SC lawmaker's pay from consulting firm tied to corporate lobbyists](#)**

Former state lawmaker Jim Harrison was funneled money from some of South Carolina's most powerful corporations and lobbying interests during his time in office, according to newly released financial records.

The evidence, which was released in court Wednesday, seemingly ties Harrison's work at one of the state's most influential consulting firms directly to powerful corporations like SCANA Corp. and AT&T.

Harrison, the former chairman of the powerful House Judiciary Committee, is facing up to 21 years in prison on charges of conspiracy, misconduct in office and lying to a state grand jury.

The evidence may sink the defense team's argument that Harrison only worked for the embattled consulting firm, Richard Quinn & Associates, as a political campaign adviser. The records are the most recent evidence to emerge in a five-year corruption probe, which has led to four guilty pleas by former South Carolina lawmakers. Harrison's case is the first to go to trial in the investigation.

The documents that prosecutors unveiled during the third day of Harrison's public corruption trial highlighted the retainer fees that political candidates and corporations paid to Richard Quinn & Associates.

The accounting records suggested the firm's employees and contractors got a cut of those payments.

Trey Walker, a former employee of the firm and currently Gov. Henry McMaster's chief of staff, got paid for campaign work for U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham and other political candidates.

Jim Merrill, a former House majority leader who also pleaded guilty to misconduct in office, got a cut of the money for his work on a campaign for former state Attorney General Charlie Condon.

But Harrison's work was listed differently. The documents suggest he wasn't paid to advise candidates or orchestrate campaigns.

According to the records, he received a \$2,000 cut from the monthly retainer paid by SCANA, one of the state's largest electric and gas utilities. The same was true for BellSouth, a former subsidiary of telecommunications giant AT&T.

And he received a \$2,350 per month payment from Unisys, an information technology company that currently has consulting contracts with state government.

Unisys also had a multimillion contract in the late 1990s to create an online system to enforce child support payments in the state. It failed to complete that work and later reached a settlement and was forced to pay money back to the state government.

Reggie Lloyd, Harrison's attorney, downplayed the evidence.

"We've been dancing around this all week. The state has strongly insinuated that Mr. Harrison got paid \$80,000 (a month) to influence legislation," Lloyd said, adding that there was no evidence anyone asked the former lawmaker to vote a certain way.

SCANA and AT&T previously reached settlement agreements with prosecutors that allowed the companies to avoid admitting any wrongdoing as part of the corruption probe. But there's no evidence Unisys reached a similar deal.

Multiple witnesses in the case verified that Harrison never worked with any of the political campaigns as he claimed. But Charles McFadden, a former vice president for SCANA, testified that he met with Harrison during meetings the utility organized with Richard Quinn & Associates.

The evidence in the case also showed Harrison never reported his income from Richard Quinn & Associates outside of one mention in 2000. That meant the State Ethics Commission — and in turn the public — were never officially notified about Harrison's employment with the firm or provided with a list of its corporate clients that had lobbyists in the Statehouse.

Harrison received more than \$900,000 from Quinn's firm for more than a decade, prosecutors said.

Payroll charts revealed the only people getting more money than Harrison at the firm were Richard Quinn and his son, former lawmaker Rick Quinn, who pleaded guilty to misconduct in office late last year. The consulting business also pleaded guilty to illegal lobbying as part of a plea deal.

The prosecutors don't expect to call Richard Quinn, the patriarch of the consulting firm, to the stand during the ongoing trial because of his health issues and his inability to recall the business operations of his firm.

"Testing his memory about things in the past was very difficult," Jim Griffin, an assistant prosecutor, told Judge Carmen Mullen.

But that doesn't mean that the jury didn't get to hear from Richard Quinn, who avoided charges due to his son's plea agreement. The prosecutors unveiled a letter to Harrison from Richard Quinn, who was a stalwart in South Carolina's political system for decades.

The document suggested Harrison's payments from the consulting firm were reduced around 2010 after several corporate clients stopped paying their retainer fees in the wake of the economic recession.

In the letter, Quinn called Harrison "a member of the family" and a "valued member of our team." But he informed Harrison, who held office for more than two decades, that the firm couldn't afford to pay him as much any more.

"We are in a financial pickle right now and have to cut costs," Quinn wrote. "We just need to get our heads together and think about how we can get more business for the firm."

The financial success of the firm hasn't improved since. It's effectively been put out of business as a result of the multi-year corruption probe.

---

### **Washington tops all states in anti-corruption ranking**

Washington state may share a name with the nation's capital, but there's no big swamp that needs to be drained in the Pacific Northwest, according to a new independent ranking of anti-corruption laws.

The state topped the inaugural S.W.A.M.P. Index's list of states with tough corruption laws, impressing analysts from the Coalition for Integrity with the strength of its ethics agency and measures to prevent lobbyists from plying elected officials with gifts.

Washington scored 78 points out of 100, narrowly edging out California and Rhode Island (75 points each) for the top spot. Still, Coalition for Integrity CEO Shruti Shah said, there's always room for improvement.

"It's a good start," said Shah, who runs the nonpartisan advocacy group that analyzes state laws governing ethics agencies, gift-giving and campaign-contribution reporting.

The S.W.A.M.P. Index, which stands for States With Anti-Corruption Measures for Public Officials, found that Washington's ethics boards overseeing the executive and legislative branches can open investigations, hold hearings and subpoena people if they learn about potential ethical violations. The boards can also levy fines and recommend suspension or prosecution.

"Having a strong ethics regime kind of serves as a model for good behavior," Shah said. "It encourages people's trust in government. It lets public officials know that this is the standard that we have to adhere to."

Elected and appointed legislators and executives in Washington are barred from accepting more than \$50 worth of gifts each year, the coalition said, and must disclose the names of corporations in which they have stakes. Political committees also must disclose the names of their donors.

Washington lost points because its ethics boards, whose members are protected from being removed without cause, and do not have the power to suspend or punish wrongdoers, other than by issuing fines, the coalition said.

The state was also criticized because the coalition found that some groups that contribute to political campaigns — limited liability companies and nonprofits — do not have to disclose owner or donor information.

Kate Reynolds, executive director of the state's Executive Ethics Board, said Washington ethics agencies were happy to be ranked first in the country.

“I think we have a nice, robust set of laws, so I’m glad to see that was recognized,” Reynolds said. “I think it’s always nice to have someone on the outside take a look at your rules and give some feedback on it.”

She said she couldn’t think of how Washington ethics laws need to be improved.

At the other end of the anti-corruption spectrum, North Dakota scored zero points on the S.W.A.M.P. Index, followed by Wyoming (12 points) and Idaho (16 points).

The Coalition for Integrity itself has come under fire for an alleged lack of integrity. A story published earlier this year in the Corporate Crime Reporter, a legal newsletter, called the coalition a “corporate front group,” because of its list of corporate donors, which include Deloitte, Citigroup and PepsiCo.

Shah said companies fund the coalition because of its international work. U.S. companies have a stake in rooting out corruption abroad to get on a “level playing field,” she said. She said corporations that donate have “no insight or influence” over the S.W.A.M.P. rankings or other coalition activities.

---

### **[Arkansas Supreme Court kicks term-limits proposal off ballot Justices find fault with petition signatures](#)**

Votes cast on a proposed constitutional amendment that would have imposed the nation's strictest term limits on state lawmakers won't be counted in the Nov. 6 general election, a divided Arkansas Supreme Court ruled Friday.

It was the second proposal knocked off the ballot in two days, leaving voters with three to choose from, with early voting starting Monday. Constitutional amendments on voter ID and adding four casinos, and an initiated act to raise the minimum wage are still on the ballot.

In a 4-3 ruling written by Justice Shawn Womack, the high court concluded that special master Mark Hewitt was correct in his findings that there were insufficient valid signatures of registered voters on petitions submitted by the Arkansas Term Limits committee to Republican Secretary of State Mark Martin's office.

Martin's office had determined that there were no more than 93,998 valid signatures submitted by the Arkansas Term Limits committee to meet the 84,859 minimum required to qualify for the general election ballot.

But then Randy Zook, chairman of the Arkansans for Common Sense Term Limits committee, challenged the signatures.

Womack has been on the state Supreme Court since 2017. His previous public service includes serving as a state lawmaker.

The proposed amendment would have limited state representatives to three two-year terms, senators to two four-year terms and a maximum of 10 years in both chambers. The current Arkansas limit is 16 years, except in the aftermath of redistricting, which can add two years to the limit for senators.

The nation's strictest term limits are in California and Oklahoma, which both limit lawmakers to serving 12 years, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Voter approval of the proposal could have left the 35-member Senate with only a handful of current senators, starting in 2023, and would have forced the departure of the current 100-member House of Representatives by then, some lawmakers warned.

The proposed ballot measure had been widely expected in political circles to be approved by voters in the wake of the five former state lawmakers either pleading guilty to or being convicted of federal charges in the past two years amid continuing federal investigations.

### **OFFICIALS PLEASED**

Gov. Asa Hutchinson said Friday, "This opinion was expected in view of the special master's findings on signature problems.

"In Arkansas, early voting begins on Monday. I am pleased that the Supreme Court made its decision on this ballot issue before Arkansans have begun casting their votes," the Republican governor said in a written statement.

House Speaker Matthew Shepherd, R-El Dorado, said in an interview that Issue 3 "would have put the Legislature in a weakened position compared to the departments, boards and commissions and the other branches of government.

"Ultimately, I think it is a good thing that it is not going forward," said Shepherd, who has served in the House since 2011.

Rep. Michael John Gray of Augusta, who also is the state Democratic Party chairman, said in an interview that the ruling "was the right decision.

"Nobody wants career politicians, but experience does matter," said Gray, who has served as a state representative since 2015.

"This is bigger than politics. ... It's about what's best for the state," he said.

Zook, who challenged Issue 3, said, "We're grateful for the court's decision to keep this harmful measure off of the Arkansas ballot."

"It was being pushed by out-of-state interest groups, and it was NOT in the best interest of our state," Zook said in a written statement.

"Not only did Issue 3's supporters fail to properly collect the signatures required by law, but the measure would have stuck Arkansans with the most restrictive term limits in our country -- a step in the wrong direction," he said.

### **'VOTERS DENIED'**

Tim Jacob, a spokesman for the Arkansas Term Limits committee that sponsored Issue 3, said, "The same forces behind the fraudulent ethics amendment have now denied the voters a chance to vote on real term limits.

"Lobbyists have ensured that for two more years our state Legislature will not have real term limits but instead have the self-serving term limits sponsored by a convicted felon," he said in a written statement. He was referring to former Sen. Jon Woods, R-Springdale, who sponsored Amendment 94 that voters approved in 2014. That amendment increased term limits for lawmakers. Woods was found guilty in a public corruption case.

"Corporate censorship of the Arkansas voter has won today, but respect and justice for voters will eventually win," Jacob said.

The Arkansans for Common Sense Term Limits committee reported raising \$60,000 in contributions and spending \$3,620 through Sept. 30. It received \$50,000 from the Arkansas Farm Bureau in Little Rock and \$10,000 from Nabholz Construction in Conway.

The U.S. Term Limits committee reported raising \$495,483.30 from the U.S. Terms Limits general fund and spending the same amount through Sept. 30. With offices in Florida and Washington, D.C., U.S. Term Limits advocates for term limits at all levels of government, and its board of directors includes Jacob, according to its website.

Nick Tomboulides, U.S. Term Limits' executive director, said Friday that "today, Arkansas politicians, lobbyists and judges should be hanging their heads in shame.

"This decision was a miscarriage of justice. After tricking the people into gutting term limits, the Arkansas General Assembly unleashed a wave of dishonesty and corruption that would have made Dick Nixon blush," he said in a written statement.

He was referring to Amendment 94, which increased term limits, and created a citizens commission that has boosted the salaries of state elected officials; barred state elected officials from accepting certain gifts from lobbyists; prohibited direct corporate contributions to state-elected officials; and extended the cooling-off period for lawmakers to become lobbyists for private clients from one year to two years.

Before Amendment 94, lawmakers were limited to serving up to three two-year terms in the state House, plus up to two four-year terms in the Senate under Amendment 73, which was approved by voters in 1992. Some senators were able to serve longer if they drew two-year terms tied to once-per-decade redistricting.

### **SIGNATURES EXCLUDED**

In its 4-3 ruling Friday, the Supreme Court said Hewitt correctly excluded 4,371 signatures because the canvassers attached false affidavits to the relevant petition parts.

"The special master used Larry Bradshaw as an example and noted that the sponsor registered him with a Bentonville address with the secretary of state," the court said.

"However, on the petition parts he collected, Bradshaw signed an affidavit that his current resident address is in Florida. He executed documents that he understood Arkansas law. Bradshaw executed his sworn-canvasser statement on June 8, 2018, and listed Florida as his current residence.

"On that same date, [the Arkansas Term Limits committee] registered Bradshaw with the secretary of state using a Bentonville, Arkansas, current residence address. The two residential addresses are in direct conflict. Further, Bradshaw later executed a sworn affidavit that the affidavit on the petition parts he collected was false to his current resident address."

The court said Hewitt correctly excluded 1,998 signatures collected by Courtney McDuffie and Jennifer Norwood because they failed to execute a sworn statement before working as paid canvassers.

The court said Hewitt also correctly excluded 3,088 signatures because the Arkansas Term Limits committee failed to provide a list of paid canvassers to the secretary of state before the signatures were collected by paid canvassers.

Hewitt also correctly excluded 479 signatures because that canvasser, Gregory Lee, had a felony conviction.

Chief Justice Dan Kemp and Justices Courtney Goodson and Rhonda Wood agreed with Womack's majority opinion.

But Justices Robin Wynne, Josephine Hart and Karen Baker dissented.

## **DISSENTING OPINION**

Wynne, who authored the dissenting opinion, wrote, "I believe that Arkansas Term Limits submitted a sufficient number of valid signatures to the secretary of state for its proposed amendment to the Arkansas Constitution to appear on the November ballot.

"When the number of signatures erroneously excluded by the master is added back into the signature count, the petition contains a sufficient number of signatures to remain on the November ballot," Wynne wrote.

Attorney Chad Pekron, who represented the Arkansas Term Limits committee, said, "Despite finding that not one of the more than 93,000 signatures of Arkansas voters was tainted by fraud or forgery, the court relies upon hypertechnical paperwork violations to invalidate 10,000 valid signatures -- just enough to keep Term Limits off the ballot."

He said the ruling strips "Arkansans of their first right under the Arkansas Constitution, the right to petition the government. We are continuing to review the opinion and consider our next options," he said.

## **POSSIBLE CHANGE**

Meanwhile, Shepherd said lawmakers have discussed whether they should "refer out [a proposed constitutional amendment] that maybe is further restrictive" than the current term limits.

"Obviously, a lot of people signed the petition. There was a significant effort to put it on the ballot this time, so I think anytime that occurs as a Legislature you pay attention to that. But it remains to be seen as to whether that is something that we would want to do," he said.

Senate President Pro Tempore Jonathan Dismang, R-Searcy, added, "I don't think there is any agreement on what that would look like."