



M U L T I S T A T E

[Chicago Sky Owner Pays \\$5,000 Ethics Fine for Lobbying Lightfoot Without Registering](#) (Illinois)

The owner of the WNBA world champion Chicago Sky paid a \$5,000 fine to resolve charges brought by the Chicago Board of Ethics that he violated the city's Governmental Ethics Ordinance, officials announced Tuesday.

[Records first published by the Chicago Tribune](#) showed Sky owner Michael Alter emailed Chicago first lady Amy Eshleman to ask for Lightfoot's help convincing state lawmakers to grant the Sky a gambling license in December. Alter's email said he had already spoken to Lightfoot.

"As you know from our previous conversation, in the big gaming bill passed in [June] 2019, all the men's professional teams were (given) the right to buy a license," Alter wrote. "The [S]ky was not included."

The Chicago Board of Ethics determined that email constituted unregistered lobbying, and determined that Alter should have registered with the city and paid a \$350 fee to lobby on behalf of the Sky. The team still does not have a gambling license.

The \$5,000 fine is the maximum allowed under the city's law for a single violation of the code, which is designed to ensure that members of the public know who is urging Chicago's elected officials to take official actions.

A spokesperson for Alter did not immediately return a request for comment from WTTW News Tuesday morning.

In statement to WTTW News after the board levied the fine last month, Alter said he "strongly disagreed" with the Ethics Board's decision.

"I reached out to the mayor to ask her to vocalize her support to the state legislature to correct the state's egregious omission from the 2019 gaming law, which granted sports licenses for all

the major sport's teams — except the Chicago Sky,” Alter said. “The entire focus of my efforts was on the state legislature — which is why I registered as a lobbyist with the state. At no time did I seek to influence or affect any city law, policy, administrative action or any other matter regarding the City of Chicago; moreover, the mayor has no authority over the state legislature.”

At Alter’s request, Lightfoot helped convince WNBA superstar Candace Parker, who played high school basketball at Naperville Central, to join the Sky.

Lightfoot, an avid basketball fan, attended several Sky games during the playoffs and regular season, and is set to celebrate the team’s [championship with a parade and rally Tuesday](#).

[Lobbyist Disclosure Reform Package Reviewed by Senate State Government Committee](#) (Pennsylvania)

A package of four bills aiming to increase transparency in Pennsylvania was reviewed during a public hearing of the Senate State Government Committee Wednesday, according to Senator David G. Argall (R-Berks/Schuylkill), who chaired the hearing. The Committee heard testimony from the prime sponsors of the bills, the Pennsylvania State Ethics Commission, and the Pennsylvania Association for Government Relations.

“It’s been almost fifteen years since The Lobbyist Disclosure Act was signed into law, and we need to update the requirements,” said Argall. “These bills are the continuation of the bipartisan work of the Senate State Government Committee this session to increase the openness and transparency of our state government.”

[Senate Bill 801](#), sponsored by Senator Bob Mensch (R-Montgomery), would require lobbyists to register any client seeking state financial assistance or grants, as well as prohibiting any kickbacks or contingency fees for successful applications for taxpayer-funded grants. It would also require the reporting of any equity a lobbyist holds in a company they lobby for.

[Senate Bill 802](#), sponsored by Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill (R-York), would prevent government entities from hiring outside lobbyists, as well as prohibiting former lobbyists who become employees of the General Assembly from being lobbied by their previous colleagues for one year.

[Senate Bill 803](#), sponsored by Senator Lisa Baker (R-Luzerne), would prevent lobbyists from also being registered as political consultants, as well as prohibiting political consultants from lobbying any client they gave advice to.

[Senate Bill 804](#), sponsored by Senator Tommy Tomlinson (R-Bucks), would require all registered lobbyists to complete mandatory ethics training on a yearly basis.

The Senate State Government Committee is expected to vote on this package of bills before the end of the year. More information about the hearing can be found on the State Government Committee's website.

[Guilty plea entered in state senate election fraud case](#) (Connecticut)

A former campaign worker for a Connecticut state senator pleaded guilty Tuesday to federal charges that she conspired to fraudulently obtain public funds for the senator's 2018 legislative campaign.

Tina Manus, 42, of Stratford, worked on the campaign of Democratic Sen. Dennis Bradley, who is awaiting trial on charges that his campaign ran a scheme to make it look as though he qualified for funds to which he was not entitled.

Manus pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and has agreed to cooperate in the investigation. She is free on a \$150,000 bond while awaiting sentencing.

Bradley, who represents Bridgeport and Stratford, and his former campaign treasurer, Jessica Martinez, were both indicted in May and have pleaded not guilty. They are awaiting trial.

Connecticut passed a law in 2005 that created a voluntary system in which legislative and statewide candidates receive public funds to run their campaigns so long as they agree to strict rules about spending and fundraising.

They must collect a specific number of small contributions — \$5 to \$100 — from individuals, including many living in their districts, to qualify for the program and receive grants for their campaigns. Contributors cannot be lobbyists, or current or prospective state contractors, or their family members. The state sets a \$2,000 limit on the expenditure of personal funds.

Bradley, among other things, is alleged to have used personal funds to pay a venue \$5,597 for a campaign event, and used personal funds for other campaign expenditures related to the event, including printed invitations and a band.

Prosecutors said that in an attempt to hide that event from elections enforcement officials, the campaign promoted it as a party for friends and clients of Bradley's law firm and altered the dates on contribution cards obtained at the party.