OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

To: All Governor’s Office Staff and Agency and Department Leadership
From: Ann O’Leary, Chief of Staff
Date: December 11, 2020
Subject: Strengthened Anti-Lobbying Commitments, in Excess of Already Strong California Legal Requirements

The team Governor Newsom has put together to serve the people of California has long adhered to the highest legal and ethical standards.

To protect the public’s trust, it is important that those who are not officially part of the Governor’s team, but whom the Governor consults for campaign or political advice, also meet a high ethical bar. The Governor has determined that this Administration will exceed the already strong California legal requirements in this regard.

The Governor is therefore instituting a new lobbying ban. Effective immediately, any paid campaign or political consultant to the Governor shall be barred from directly communicating on behalf of a client with the Governor, members of his staff, or the agencies under his control for the purpose of influencing legislative or administrative action. Further, no registered lobbyist can be a paid campaign or political consultant to the Governor. This will ensure that the Governor’s paid campaign or political consultants cannot lobby the Governor, members of his staff, or agencies under his control.

In addition, the Governor has directed the Legal Affairs Secretary to appoint a Chief Ethics Advisor to advise him and his team on all ethics matters. The Legal Affairs Secretary has appointed Deputy Legal Affairs Secretary Rei Onishi to serve in this role.
To further advance our commitment to operate under the highest ethical standards, at the Governor's direction, I will be requesting additional ideas or practices from the Fair Political Practices Commission to promote transparency and limit undue influence. These ideas or practices should be provided by no later than February 1, 2021.