

BGOV Power Play

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Corporate Donations in the 'Crosshairs'



Rep. Robert Garcia

Photographer: Kent Nishimura/Bloomberg

First in Power Play: With K Street and corporate America bracing for a flurry of post-midterm congressional investigations, a top business school and the Center for Political Accountability are out with a new guide cautioning business leaders that **their political donations “are in the crosshairs.”**

The **new primer on political activity** is from the Impact, Value, and Sustainable Business Initiative at the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School of Business and the center, which urges companies to voluntarily disclose more about their political expenditures. They shared it first with Power Play.

“The primer’s coming out at a **critical time for business, which faces the greatest risks** maybe since the Gilded Age,” said Bruce Freed, president of the center, in an interview. “Business has to take a look at its political spending and what that enables and how they need to handle it today because they face a broad range of threats.”

The [guide](#) says that corporate and executive **political expenditures should be assessed** on three criteria:

- Can a strong case be made that the spending advances the corporation’s key business objectives?
- Does the spending **threaten the company’s reputation** or expose it to unnecessary risks?
- Regardless of legal risks, is this kind of spending ethical?