

INFLUENCE

— By Brody Mullins —

Welcome to **Influence by Brody Mullins**, a newsletter about business and advocacy in Washington. Please forward this to anyone who might like it! Subscribe [here](#).

At a time of escalating political risk for companies, the Center for Political Accountability has unveiled a new way to track the reputational risks for companies that have donated to Donald Trump's various pet projects.

The goal of the tracker is to highlight "perceived corruption" and show companies the dangers of making big political contributions – even legal ones – in today's hyper partisan era.

The tracker seeks to match big corporate donations to Trump-affiliated entities with actions by the Trump administration that appear to benefit the corporate donor.

The new "[Corporate Political Spending-Administration Action Tracker](#)" could provide a roadmap for Democrats planning oversight investigations into companies that have shelled out money to Trump-affiliated entities.

So far, it documents two dozen examples of companies that have received a benefit from the administration after making donations.

The companies identified so far have donated a total of \$43 million to the MAGA Super PAC, the 2024 presidential inauguration or Trump's new ballroom.

Those companies have received a total of \$55.6 billion in the form of government contracts, merger approvals, DoJ actions or other favorable regulatory decisions by various Executive Branch agencies and departments.

For example, the GEO Group has donated more than \$3 million to the MAGA super PAC in the past year.

During that time, the Trump administration took several steps that benefitted the GEO Group, including awarding a \$1-billion contract last year for the largest ICE detention and processing center on the East Coast.

Reynolds American gave \$5 million to the Trump super PAC not long before the FDA released new guidance on flavored vapes that could help the tobacco giant.

The point: The donations are perfectly legal – but they still could create headaches for the companies.

“Companies need to be a lot more concerned about not corruption, but the perception of corruption,” said Jeanne Hanna, the vice president of research at the Center for Political Accountability.

Hanna said companies need to be aware that employees, customers, board members, shareholders and other stakeholders are closely following stories in the media about perceived corruption.

Check out the full report [here](#).