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From: Sidoti, Elizabeth [/O=MSXBP/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN= [REDACTED]]
Sent: Mon 13/03/2017 7:46:47 PM (UTC)
Subject: RE: POLITICO Influence: Courtovich firm signs new client — Pro-Trump nonprofit plagued by power struggles — Top House brass throw Ossoff fundraiser

Redacted - First Amendment

From: Geoff Morrell [mailto: [REDACTED]@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2017 3:33 PM
To: Stout, Robert; Streett, Mary; Sidoti, Elizabeth
Subject: Fwd: POLITICO Influence: Courtovich firm signs new client — Pro-Trump nonprofit plagued by power struggles — Top House brass throw Ossoff fundraiser

Redacted - First Amendment

Geoff Morrell
[REDACTED]

Begin forwarded message:

From: "POLITICO Influence" < [REDACTED]@politico.com>
Date: March 13, 2017 at 2:01:37 PM EDT
To: < [REDACTED]@gmail.com>
Subject: POLITICO Influence: Courtovich firm signs new client — Pro-Trump nonprofit plagued by power struggles — Top House brass throw Ossoff fundraiser
Reply-To: "POLITICO subscriptions" < [REDACTED]@politicoemail.com>

By Theodoric Meyer | 03/13/2017 01:58 PM EDT

With Mary Lee, Aubree Eliza Weaver and Daniel Lippman

COURTOVICH FIRM SIGNS NEW LOBBYING CLIENT: SGR LLC Government Relations and Lobbying, the sister firm to **Jim Courtovich's Sphere Consulting**, has reported signing its first lobbying client since **The Wall Street Journal** revealed last month that federal authorities are looking into whether Courtovich was involved in a kickback scheme. SGR's **James Graham Miller** will lobby for **A & C Laboratories**, a biotech firm, on "Issues related to the Controlled Substance Act and medical research," according to a disclosure report. SGR actually signed the client in December but didn't file the paperwork reporting it until last week. The Journal's **Brody Mullins** has reported that the FBI and the Justice Department are looking into whether Courtovich or his former firm, National Media, helped **Evan Morris**, a former **Genentech** lobbyist, hide payments as part of a kickback scheme. Courtovich's lawyer, **Eric Lewis**, said in a statement at the time that "any assertion that Sphere is the target of a government investigation is unfounded."

PRO-TRUMP NONPROFIT PLAGUED BY POWER STRUGGLES: "A political group launched by some of President **Donald Trump's** top campaign advisers to boost the White House in its biggest policy fights has been conspicuously absent as Trump begins to sell his agenda, hobbled by staffing delays, internal jockeying for control and a struggle to win the favor of big donors," **POLITICO's Shane Goldmacher** reports. "Trump counselor **Kellyanne Conway** once promised the organization, now known as **America First Policies**, would provide a "surround-sound super structure" to boost the president's goals. After nearly two months, there has been little activity aside from a press release announcing the group's formation and a recent smattering of posts on Twitter and Facebook."

- "'To say that the folks inside the White House are disappointed that there's been no air support in the first 50 days is an understatement,' said a person involved with the nonprofit, one of [10] Trump officials engaged

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with the group or at the White House who spoke about the group with POLITICO. 'Things have moved very slow and there's a lot of frustration that things need to move faster.' Now some are setting out to create a second competing nonprofit group, with the notable backing of the wealthy Mercer family, who are perhaps the most prominent donors in Trump's orbit and who have long sought strict authority over their political spending. A third group could even be in the works." [Full story.](#)

Good afternoon, and welcome to PI. Got a tip? Switching jobs? Overhear a juicy conversation on the Acela? **Get in touch:** [REDACTED]@politico.com. You can also follow me on Twitter: @ [REDACTED]

CALLOUT: Thanks to everyone who's emailed me tips about influencers who aren't registered to lobby. I'm following up on your tips. If you haven't gotten in touch yet, there's still time: [REDACTED]@politico.com.

KUSHNER FAMILY COMPANY SET TO STRIKE DEAL WITH CHINESE: "A company owned by the family of **Jared Kushner**, President **Donald Trump's** son-in-law and senior adviser, stands to receive more than \$400 million from a prominent Chinese company that is investing in the [Kushners'](#) marquee Manhattan office tower at 666 Fifth Ave," **Bloomberg News'** **David Kocieniewski** and **Caleb Melby** report. "The planned \$4-billion transaction includes terms that some real estate experts consider unusually favorable for the Kushners. It provides them with both a sizable cash payout from **Anbang Insurance Group** for a property that has struggled financially and an equity stake in a new partnership. ... It would make business partners of **Kushner Cos.** and Anbang, whose murky links to the Chinese power structure have raised national security concerns over its U.S. investments." [Full story.](#)

PRUITT ALLIES SIGN FIRST FEDERAL CLIENT: "A pair of allies to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) head **Scott Pruitt** are lobbying policymakers on ethanol issues," **The Hill's Timothy Cama** reports. "**Glenn Coffee** and **Crystal Coon**, through their firm, **Coffee Group**, filed [paperwork](#) this week with Congress to represent Oklahoma-based gasoline station and convenience store owner **QuikTrip Corp.** on issues related to the Renewable Fuel Standard. Pruitt and Coffee were both Republican state senators in Oklahoma from 1999 until 2011, when they both took on state government positions."

- "Pruitt became attorney general and Coffee became secretary of State that year, and they remained close, according to [StateImpact Oklahoma](#). Coon was a senior adviser to Pruitt from 2015 to 2016. Greenwire first [reported](#) on the lobbying registration Friday. QuikTrip is the first federal lobbying client for Coffee and Coon, who are still based in Oklahoma City." [Full story.](#)

HOUSE DEMOCRATS HOST OSSOFF FUNDRAISER: The top House Democratic brass will host a fundraiser on Thursday at Democratic National Committee headquarters for **Jon Ossoff**, whom Democrats have seized on as their best shot at snapping up the conservative-leaning House seat in the Atlanta suburbs vacated by HHS Secretary **Tom Price**. Among the headliners: House Minority Leader **Nancy Pelosi**; Minority Whip **Steny Hoyer**; Assistant Minority Leader **Jim Clyburn**; Caucus Chairman **Joe Crowley**; Caucus Vice Chairwoman **Linda Sánchez**; DCCC Chairman **Ben Ray Lujan**; and Reps. **Sanford Bishop**, **Hank Johnson**, **John Lewis** and **David Scott**, all Georgia Democrats. The jungle primary for the special election is April 18. [Here's the invitation.](#)

ACLU LAUNCHES GRASSROOTS EFFORT: "The **ACLU** is spending millions of dollars on a plunge into grassroots politics - a 'People Power' campaign," **The Washington Post's David Weigel** reports. "It's the newest and largest development from a sprawling 'resistance' movement that regularly moves faster than the Democratic Party's leaders can think and isn't waiting on politicians for cues. People Power debuted this weekend in South Florida and, by the organization's estimate, at thousands of weekend house parties nationwide. Everyone who showed up received a nine-point plan to turn blue America into a network of 'freedom cities' by defying the president's executive orders, his health-care agenda and his Justice Department." [Full story.](#)

LAWYERS PLAN TO HOUND TRUMP USING FOIA: "Concerned by the shortage of government experience and early missteps by Trump administration officials - including President Trump - a group of lawyers is launching a watchdog organization that will seek to track the administration's ethics and expose potential conflicts, fraud or other wrongdoing," **USA Today's Donovan Slack** reports. The organization, 'American Oversight,' which says it is nonpartisan despite some of its founders having deep ties to

Democrats, will focus on prying loose documents through public records requests and lawsuits under the Freedom of Information Act." [Full story.](#)

DAIRY LOBBY HEADS TO MEXICO: "Top U.S. dairy industry officials are headed to Mexico next week on a mission to save their top export market as European Union and New Zealand competitors look for ways to exploit the uncertainties created by President **Donald Trump**'s push to renegotiate NAFTA," **POLITICO**'s **Doug Palmer** reports. "We want to reemphasize the fact that Mexico is a valued customer for dairy," said [former Agriculture Secretary] **Tom Vilsack**, president and CEO of the **U.S. Dairy Export Council**. "Obviously any agreement that's been around for awhile has areas where there can be improvements, but we want to make sure they understand, from our perspective, that preserving NAFTA is important." [Full story.](#)

HOUSE WEIGHS FEC OVERSIGHT HEARING: "The Federal Election Commission - an agency of clashing commissioners, seething staffers and key vacancies - may soon face congressmen who wonder: Why's the agency a basket case?" the **Center for Public Integrity**'s **Dave Levinthal** reports. "Such a trip under Congress' microscope could come in the form of a Committee on House Administration oversight hearing, something the FEC hasn't endured since 2011, when super PACs were still novel and the now-seminal *Citizens United v. FEC* decision wasn't yet two years old. A planned oversight hearing in 2014 never materialized. 'It's time,' Committee on House Administration member **Barry Loudermilk**, a Republican congressman from Georgia, told the Center for Public Integrity. 'We should take the opportunity and have a re-evaluation.'" [Full story.](#)

JOB MOVES:

- **Michael Beckel** is joining **Issue One**, a nonprofit dedicated to reducing the influence of money in politics, as manager of research, investigations and policy analysis. He was previously a reporter for the **Center for Public Integrity**.
- **Margo Klosterman** started today as director of legislative and political relations for **Delta Dental Plans Association**. She was previously a lobbyist for the **American Dental Association**.
- **Kaavya Ramesh** has joined the **ONE Campaign** as marketing coordinator. He previously was senior communications associate for economic policy studies for the **American Enterprise Institute**.
- "Nancy Dorn, GE's VP of government affairs and policy, will be retiring from the company this fall after a 14-year run," per Playbook. "Starting on April 1, **Karan Bhatia**, currently the VP of global government affairs and policy (and former deputy USTR in the Bush Administration) will lead GE's combined government affairs and policy team in Washington."

SPOTTED: At the **Dell** "Experience" at SXSW over the weekend, according to a PI tipster: Reps. **Nanette Diaz Barragan** (D-Calif.), **Suzan DelBene** (D-Wash.), **Blake Farenthold** (R-Texas), **Ruben Gallego** (D-Ariz.), **Randy Hultgren** (R-Ill.), **Will Hurd** (R-Texas), **Robin Kelly** (D-Ill.) and **Marc Veasey** (D-Texas); **Marsha Catron** of Barragan's office; **Chuck Flint** of Rep. **Marsha Blackburn**'s office; **Jay Cho** of Kelly's office; **Thomas Hester** of Rep. **Michael McCaul**'s office; **Austin Carson** of **TechFreedom**; **Cindy Jimenez** of **United Technologies**; **Meredith Mull** of **PricewaterhouseCoopers**; **Nika Nour** of the **Entertainment Software Association**; **Evan Burfield** of **1776**; **Danielle Gilliam-Moore** of **Salesforce**; **Alex Wirth** of **Quorum**; **Katie Oyama** of **Google**; and **Cris Turner** of **Dell**.

- At the **Pandora** receptions at SXSW this weekend, according to a PI tipster: Reps. **Robin Kelly** (D-Ill.) and **Hakeem Jeffries** (D-N.Y.); **Kerry Hyder Jr.** of the **Detroit Lions**; **Andrew Sendejo** of the **Minnesota Vikings**; **Marshall Newhouse**, who just signed with the **Oakland Raiders**; **Brandon Webb** and **Jay Cho** of Kelly's office; **Tyler Grimm** of Rep. **Darrell Issa**'s office; **Chris Randle** of Jeffries' office; **Brighton Haslett** of the House Ways and Means Committee; and the musician **Chad Lawson**.

NEW JOINT FUNDRAISERS

Maggie Hassan GVP: Non-Qualified Non-Party, Joint Fundraiser
Rand Paul Victory: Non-Qualified Non-Party, Joint Fundraiser
Renacci Victory Committee: Non-Qualified Non-Party, Joint Fundraiser

NEW PACs:

Conservative Triumph Fund: Non-Qualified Non-Party, Unauthorized
National Draft E.W. Jackson For Senate Committee: Super PAC, Unauthorized
Pelican PAC: Non-Qualified Non-Party, Leadership PAC
Southwest Progressive Democrats: Non-Qualified Non-Party, Unauthorized

NEW LOBBYING REGISTRATIONS:

Barnes & Thornburg, LLP: American Medical Response, Inc.
BGR Government Affairs: American Beverage Association
BGR Government Affairs: Brundage-Bone Concrete Pumping
BGR Government Affairs: Lockton Management, LLC
Cloakroom Advisors LLC: Marcus, Neiman & Rashbaum and Marcell Felipe P.A. on behalf of claimants regarding Horsky IRS
FLIR Systems, Inc. and Subsidiaries: FLIR Systems, Inc. and Subsidiaries
Groom Law Group, Chartered: NFL Player Disability and Neurocognitive Benefit Plan
Michael Torrey Associates, LLC: Dairy Business Milk Marketing Cooperative
Mr. Barry Strumpf Consulting: PrimeSource Building Products, Inc
Raffaniello & Associates: PSEG
Red Maple Consulting, LLC: Potomac Partners DC (on behalf of Orange County, CA)
SGR LLC Government Relations and Lobbying: A and C Laboratories
Terrence C. Wolfe: The Cormac Group
The Color Nine Group, LLC: Walton County BOCC

NEW LOBBYING TERMINATIONS:

John Dudinsky & Associates: Greater Orlando Aviation Authority
ML Strategies, LLC: American Hospital Association
Ms. Alexandra Sheppard: John Deere

To view online:

<http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/politico-influence/2017/03/courtovich-firm-signs-new-client-219195>

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