M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

MEMORANDUM

To: Vendors Conducting Business with the State of Connecticut

From: M. Jodi Rell, Governor

Subject: State Ethics Policy

Date: September 28, 2004

As you are undoubtedly aware, state government is striving to improve how it conducts its business. The task force charged with analyzing the state contracting process recently recommended to me several areas which require improvement. I expect to implement a number of those recommendations. Your assistance is needed in order to facilitate change.

While the state ethics code does not prohibit gifts to state employees altogether—for example, the law permits employees to accept a gift in celebration of a major life event and up to $50 per calendar year in food and beverage—the intent of the code is clear. State employees should not just avoid impropriety, but even the mere appearance of impropriety, and should forego accepting gifts from those with whom the state does business.

I would also call your attention to section 1-84(m) of the Connecticut General Statutes, which prohibits state employees from accepting gifts from those who do business, or seek to do business, with the employee's agency or department. Vendors and prospective vendors are also prohibited from knowingly giving gifts to state employees in violation of this section.

My request to you is this, no matter how well-intentioned or appreciative you may be of an employee's assistance, I would ask that you refrain from offering a state employee a gift of any kind, including, but not limited to, meals and beverages. Offering a gift to an employee puts the employee in the rather uncomfortable position of having to decline the gift or ascertain its monetary value and consult with an attorney and/or the state Ethics Commission.

I expect—and indeed the residents of this state deserve—state government employees to adhere to the highest ethical standards, which may entail more stringent practices than even the ethics code provides. With your assistance, the state should be well on its way to restoring the public's faith in state government.

I would appreciate it if you would communicate this message to your employees. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

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