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ETHICS & CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC OFFICE

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Why ethics in public office matters
Conflict of Interest

- Government Code 1090/1091
  - Contract
  - Official Action
  - Financial Interest

- Government Code 87100
  - No contract = misdemeanor

- Bribery
  - Quid pro quo (Romans took payoffs too)
Misappropriation of Public Funds

- Penal Code 424
  - Public Funds
  - Person trusted with funds (influence, not possession)
  - Spending not authorized by law
  - Knew or was reckless
FEDERAL LAWS

- Bribery
- Mail and wire fraud
- Extortion / Hobbs Act
- Honest services fraud
- Campaign finance laws
- Foreign Corrupt Practices Act
- Conspiracy / RICO
Role of media?
Advising Public Officials

- Who is the client?
- Identifying conflicts of interest
- Transparency
- Independence
Special Reports

- Role of Commissions
- Role of Blue Ribbon panels
- Role of grand juries
REFORMS

- Changing the culture
- Whistleblowing
- Need new laws?
- More resources?
THANK YOU