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SPECIAL TOPIC

# Sarah Palin Calls For Major Lobbying Reforms — Will Conservatives Join Her?

By Zaid Jilani on Nov 18, 2011 at 12:00 pm



The top 1 percent have captured the nation's political system through the use of big-money lobbying and other influence-peddling. A *60 Minutes* investigation based on the research from conservative investigator Peter Schweitzer that aired on Sunday showed how members of Congress are profiting off their own version of insider trading, a particularly pernicious form of congressional privilege.



Palin has given the thumbs-up to major lobbying reforms. Will conservatives join her?

Today, former GOP vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin blasts this insider trading and other practices related to the link between Big Money and Congress in a Wall Street Journal op-ed. Complaining that Congress has "occupied Wall Street" and is profiting off of its inside connections, [Palin calls for a series of lobbying reforms](#):

What are the solutions? We need reform that provides real transparency. **Congress should be subject to the Freedom of Information Act like everyone else. We need more detailed financial disclosure reports, and members should submit reports much more often than once a year. All stock transactions above \$5,000 should be disclosed within five days.**

We need equality under the law. From now on, laws that apply to the private sector must apply to Congress, including whistleblower, conflict-of-interest and insider-trading laws. Trading on nonpublic government information should be illegal both for those who pass on the information and those who trade on it. (This should close the loophole of the blind trusts that aren't really blind because they're managed by family members or friends.)

**No more sweetheart land deals with campaign contributors. No gifts of IPO shares. No trading of stocks related to committee assignments. No earmarks where the congressman receives a direct benefit. No accepting campaign contributions while Congress is in session. No lobbyists as family members, and no transitioning into a lobbying career after leaving office. No more revolving door, ever.**

Whether Palin is truly sincere about calling for these reforms or is simply riding a wave of political anger is unclear. But she concludes her piece by saying that the "The grass-roots movements of the right and the left should embrace" these reforms. Yet the institutional right-wing in American politics has always resisted reforms to the lobbying system. The bill before

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the House of Representatives to ban the form of insider trading 60 Minutes highlighted had only five co-sponsors before the report aired — all Democrats. Afterward, it has 40 Democratic Party co-sponsors and a paltry six Republican co-sponsors. If Palin is really serious about pushing for these reforms, she should publicly call on these fellow conservatives in Congress by name to join her in enacting them.

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