

Firms Pay Penalties for LDA Violations, Fines Total \$47,000

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Contrary to the assumption of many in the industry, the federal government is enforcing the provisions of the Lobbying Disclosure Act (LDA) through its prosecutorial powers. During the summer, the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia released the text of three civil settlements related to LDA violations, with total fines of \$47,000.

Natsource LLC, a Washington lobbying firm, settled for \$25,000. According to the terms of the settlement, Natsource failed to file mid-year LDA reports in 2003. CHG & Associates, another lobbying firm, agreed to pay \$12,000 to settle civil claims that it failed to file semi-annual LDA reports in 2000. Finally, an unnamed lobbyist agreed to pay \$10,000 to the U.S. Attorney in order to close his or her civil case. The lobbyist also agreed that neither he nor she, nor his or her employer, will engage in federal lobbying activities for three years. The settlement agreement stated that this lobbyist failed to file semi-annual LDA reports on multiple occasions.

All of the settlement agreements contain provisions that do not release the private parties from, among other things, any criminal claims.

Guidance about the LDA can be found on the Secretary of the Senate's website.

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