

## Trevor Potter is Quoted on Political Ads Potentially Violating Campaign Laws

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KPBS News

KPBS News talks to Trevor Potter concerning political ads run by *San Diego Union-Tribune* and the paper's potential violation of campaign laws. For more on the story, please go to KPBS's website.

*Excerpt taken from the article.*

Federal election rules are even stricter than the state's. They don't allow special pricing of ads even if the discount is disclosed.

"It's not permissible under the federal election laws to offer a discount period to federal candidates," said former Federal Election Commission Chairman Trevor Potter. "The federal rule is that candidates must pay the market rate. You have to treat candidates the same way you would treat other customers."

Potter said most media outlets are familiar with that rule.

"I've not heard of a case in the past where a newspaper has intervened in a federal election by selling discounted space because most newspapers understand that they cannot make a contribution to federal candidates through their advertising," Potter said.

Manchester, a hotel developer, entered the newspaper business in December 2011. He bought the North County Times last fall. But Potter, who was appointed to the FEC by George H.W. Bush and has taught elections law for 25 years, said Manchester's relatively recent experience as a newspaper owner wouldn't be an excuse. It's unlikely that everyone in the newspaper's advertising department is new, he said.

"They would have had a real problem if this had been a common practice over the years," Potter said. "If it wasn't done in the past, then the question is why change it now and why didn't someone say something."

### **Attorneys**

Trevor Potter

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