

State Auditor Mike Foley Issues Audit Report on Nebraska Highway Commission

Ethical Abuse Cited in Report

State Auditor Mike Foley announced today the release of an audit of the Nebraska Highway Commission.

The key finding of the report involves the longstanding practice of the Nebraska Highway Commission to hold one of its meetings per year in a location outside of Lincoln and to combine that official State government meeting with one or more social functions.

The audit report documents that an employee at the Department of Roads while on State government time used State resources and letterhead to solicit financial donations from outside corporate interests to raise over \$5,100 to cover costs associated with golf, cocktails and dinner, and other social events for the benefit of members and spouses of the Highway Commission and Department of Roads personnel. Of the \$5,100 in contributions, some \$3,150 consisted of cash contributions that were deposited and spent through the State's accounting system. The Auditors believe the Highway Commission has been soliciting contributions for its social events for the past 17 years although they understand that this is the first instance where the contributions were directly solicited by a State employee and processed through the State's accounting system.

State Auditor Foley observed that Highway Commission members should not be using their positions as government officials to solicit cocktails, meals, hotel expenses, and rounds of golf or anything else that results in personal gain. The use of a State employee to solicit contributions from outside corporate interests to pay for these only compounds the offense. The matter will be referred to the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission for whatever action they deem appropriate.

A copy of the audit report can be found on the State Auditor's website under "**What's New**":
<http://www.auditors.state.ne.us/>