Public Relations Society of America

Board of Ethics and Professional Standards Code of Ethics Case Study Series

Public Relations Ethics Case Study #3

Assume that you are the president of PR Results, Inc., a Las Vegas-based public relations firm representing the National Cement and Asphalt Contractor's Association (NCACA). NCACA has been closely monitoring high-growth communities across the country, like Las Vegas, that are preparing to vote soon on regional transportation and road improvement plans. NCACA has hired your firm to organize and manage a citizen's group in Las Vegas called Las Vegas Citizens for Active Road Expansion (LVCARE). The group's sole purpose is to persuade voters to pass Las Vegas' aggressive road expansion plans (and bring more business to local and national cement and asphalt companies). A reporter from the *Las Vegas Tribune* learns about LVCARE and contacts you for information regarding the individuals or organization(s) funding/backing the group. Your client asks you to keep their involvement confidential. Your "gut" tells you to disclose the information; however, you are concerned about losing the business if you go against your client's wishes. What do you do?

1. Define the specific ethical issue and/or conflict.

2. Identify internal/external factors that may influence the decision.

3. <u>Identify key values.</u>

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4. <u>Identify the public who may be affected by the decision and define the public</u> relations professional's obligation to each.

5. <u>Select ethical principles to guide the decision making process.</u>

6. <u>Make a decision and justify.</u>