

Opinion: Legislators' junket proves it's business as usual

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More than 20 legislators led by Speaker John A. Pérez are in Maui, courtesy of interest groups and lobbyists who soon will be seeking their votes on legislation.

As the *Bee's* Jim Sanders reported on Wednesday, some and perhaps all of the Assembly members and senators are accepting airfare and lodging paid for by a nonprofit corporation called California Independent Voter Project. The article raises an issue that the newly aggressive Fair Political Practices Commission ought to confront.

The California Independent Voter Project is a brainchild of Steve Peace, a former assemblyman, senator and director of the California Department of Finance. Because he established his group as a nonprofit, Peace is under no obligation to identify the donors who are footing the bill, or how much they are contributing.

Other nonprofits also sponsor junkets without disclosing who pays. The FPPC should find a way to remove this blind spot from the law, and adopt rules that would require that nonprofit corporations disclose donors who pay for such junkets.

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