

Letter to the Editor: Opponent Chris Slusser Reports Prenzler Repeatedly Broke Ethics Pledge With Donations From County Vendors

by Chris Slusser

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Letter To The Editor:

Today County Treasurer Chris Slusser released records showing that County Board Chairman Kurt Prenzler repeatedly broke a 2016 campaign pledge to refuse to accept political donations from anyone doing business with the county.



Screenshots from 2016 show that Prenzler wrote the following on Facebook: “My opponent has taken well over \$100,000 in campaign contributions from county vendors. I think that is wrong. As county chairman I will refuse to accept political donations from anyone doing business with the county. Ethics matter.” Then in a separate post, Prenzler wrote: “unlike my opponent, I don’t accept donations from county vendors.” But according to official records from the State Board of Elections website, Prenzler has accepted 150 donations from county vendors totaling more than \$82,000 since being

elected Chairman in 2016. Prenzler started accepting such donations within months of taking office.

Official records show in 2017, Prenzler accepted 14 donations totaling more than \$11,000 from county vendors. He accepted 14 donations totaling nearly \$10,000 in 2018; 19 donations totaling \$8,450 in 2019; 23 donations totaling \$19,900 in 2020; 29 donations totaling \$10,690 in 2021; 23 donations totaling \$8,250 in 2022; and 28 donations totaling \$14,500 in 2023. "I guess ethics only matter for Kurt Prenzler when he thinks the voters aren't paying attention," said Slusser. "Well, fellow Republican voters are now paying attention, and the receipts don't lie.

"These records give new context to Prenzler's recent ethical lapses with County Vendors. Just months ago, Prenzler was the subject of an ethics investigation (by an ethics advisor he himself had appointed) that found he violated county ethics ordinances when he handed out campaign materials in the county administration building, on county time. In one of the incidents, Prenzler admitted to handing a campaign card to a county vendor, while discussing county business with the vendor. The card contained a link to his online campaign donation portal. County Ethics Advisor Bruce Mattea's report stated that Prenzler's actions appear to be a quid-pro-quo: that if the county vendor made a political donation, he may receive more business from the county." Based on Mr. Prenzler's long-documented track record of hounding county vendors for political donations since he became chairman, I think it's easy to draw the conclusion that he was attempting to shake down another county vendor in this instance," said Slusser. "I think he should honor his original promise to the voters, and return all of the 150 donations from county vendors immediately."

Below are links to the Facebook posts referenced in the release, as well as a link to his campaign committee's details on the State Board of Elections website and a link to the County Auditor's online check register, where county payments can be sorted by vendor:

<https://www.facebook.com/share/JAzcvcgMjcGvhqLc/?mibextid=WC7FNe>

<https://www.facebook.com/share/jk1NNTk1FcBstFzu/?mibextid=WC7FNe>

<https://elections.il.gov/CampaignDisclosure/CommitteeDetail.aspx?ID=O2ZE%2f9d8NP82VbHX8zNNAQ%3d%3d>

https://www.madisoncountyiil.gov/government/government_transparency/madison_county_auditor_check_register/

[County Chairman Ethic Inquiry](#)

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