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Top-Tier Clients in a Top-Tier State

New Jersey is one of the top-tier states in the nation. Although it is the fourth smallest state, its population is the eleventh largest, it's ranked second in median household income and ranks fifth in median home sales prices (http://www.trulia.com/home_prices/). The pharmaceutical, chemical, food processing, and telecommunication industries call it home; light bulbs, phonographs and movies lay claim to being invented here. Despite its rich history it has the distinction of being the most corrupt state in the nation.

In a revealing book (*The Soprano State*, St. Martin's Press, 2008), Bob Ingle and Sandy McClure paint a haunting picture of the incestuous, insidious nature of corruption that has besieged the state for generations. Starting with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) - Medicare fraud, doctors who traded referrals for no-show faculty jobs, students who received credits for root canal classes they skipped; to governors appointing either unqualified individuals or those with drug addictions to critical positions; to rampant misuse of funds by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; to the decadence of the state's Emergency Medical Services - the level of influence pedaling is incredulous. Who doesn't know a good joke about New Jersey?

In many ways there are similarities between a corrupt state and a fraudulent company. The individuals who work in the company are generally honest and not involved with the sordid details; the residents of the state are also generally honest and not involved with the corrupt details. Company workers have little recourse other than accept the reality of the situation, quit the job or be a whistle blower; residents of the state also have little recourse other than accept the realities, leave the state or continue to subsidize the corruption through increasingly higher taxes.

The similarities continue in the context of retaining top-tier status. For a state to retain its top-tier status it needs to retain its top-tier citizens and encourage their loyalty; for a company to retain its top-tier status it needs to retain its top-tier clients and encourage their loyalty. Once top-tier citizens or clients depart, margins will diminish, revenues will fall and the organization may ultimately fail. That would be a shame for this state and for the great businesses and residents who reside here.

Fortunately the residents of the state have an option – the power of their vote.

With one small click or check they can replace the crooked politicians and begin the process of extricating the state from the abyss of corruption. In the final analysis, it's only the citizens who can save the state from its tormentors and to allow it retain its position as one of the best states in the nation. The beneficiaries are the citizens themselves and the great companies who reside here.