



**PRESS RELEASE**  
September 9, 2009

**For Immediate Release**

Contact:

For more information:

Tom Tresser, 312-804-3230, tom@tresser.com

<http://www.nogameschicago.com>

---

## No Games Chicago Has No Confidence in Chairman Burke

With the Chicago City Council set to sign the Mayor's 2016 blank check it also determined to give oversight of the city taxes for and participation with the games to Alderman Ed Burke, Chairman of the [City Council Finance Committee](#).(1)

This clearly won't work for Chicago's taxpayers. The Alderman has so many conflict of interests representing firms that do business with the city that he has become a millionaire. [He regularly uses the city government for his personal gain](#).(2) [Tuesday's Chicago Sun-Times reports further abuse](#).(3)

Although he chairs the Finance Committee which has a huge staff and multi-million dollar budget he hasn't exercised oversight over anything that we can see, including the parking meeter rip off. Crain's Chicago ran a front page story titled "[Amid Crisis, Where's Ed?](#)"(4)

The council's cursory review and quick approval of the \$1.16-billion, 75-year parking-meter lease, designed to help fill a \$469-million budget deficit, spurred some aldermen to call for a more-activist finance committee. Currently, the committee devotes much of its time to legal claims against the city, employee benefits issues and other routine matters.

The Crain's report notes Mr. Burke's ability to raise campaign contributions from firms that do business with the city.

He rakes in campaign contributions, some from companies like Bank of America Corp., CenterPoint Properties Trust, Commonwealth Edison Co. and Cole Taylor Bank that do business with the city and with Mr. Burke's law firm. At last count, his campaign fund totaled \$3.7 million - more than any other alderman's. Among recent contributions was \$3,000 from Patrick Ryan, the former Aon Corp. CEO who chairs the Chicago 2016 Olympics committee. In his latest disclosure statement filed with the city, Mr. Burke reported receiving at least \$5,000 in 2008 from each of 31 law clients that also do business with the city. His firm, Klafter & Burke, is known for its work on property tax appeals.

## NO GAMES CHICAGO – ADD ONE

"Hold the phone! Patrick Ryan, the Chairman of the 2016 Committee gave Burke \$3,000?! And Burke is supposed to keep Ryan and the 2016 operation honest?" said No Games Chicago organizer Tom Tresser, "Surely, THAT'S GOT TO BE a conflict of interest?" An examination of Burke's 2008 "[Statement of Financial Interest](#)" (5) reveals that the Alderman listed ten clients who are major donors to the 2016 Committee.

Bank of America, Chicago & N.E. II District Council of Carpenters, Commonwealth Edison, Dominick's, Harris Bank, MB Real Estate, Northern Trust Company, Northwestern Memorial Hospital, U.S. Equities Realty and William Wrigley Jr. Company are all clients of Mr. Burke and they or a related entity all made contributions of cash or service to the 2016 Committee. Exact amounts of donations are not listed on the 2016 reports, **but these contributions are worth AT LEAST \$1,000,000**. The total donated by Burke's clients is likely MUCH HIGHER *since eight are noted to have given at least \$100,000*. [Download our analysis of his 2016 conflicts](#).(6)

Tresser concluded, "No Games Chicago has always predicted that our aldermen would abandon their duty to protect taxpayer interests and go along with the Mayor's Olympic blank check. With their placement of Alderman Burke at the helm of so-called 'oversight,' the sheep have sent the fox to watch the wolves."

###

---

[No Games Chicago](#)(7) is an all-volunteer group of social justice activists, concerned citizens and grassroots organizations opposed to bringing the 2016 Olympics to Chicago. The group was launched on January 31, 2009 with a public forum at the University of Illinois Chicago.

- (1) <http://www.committeefinance.org>
- (2) <http://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local-beat/Inside-Ed-Burkes-Palace.html>
- (3) <http://www.suntimes.com/news/watchdogs/1758078,CST-NWS-watchdog08.article>
- (4) <http://www.chicagobusiness.com/cgi-bin/article.pl?articleId=32163>
- (5) <http://www.chicityclerk.com/FinancialInterestStatements.php>
- (6) [http://nogames.wordpress.com/files/2009/09/burke\\_2008\\_financial\\_statement2016\\_donors.pdf](http://nogames.wordpress.com/files/2009/09/burke_2008_financial_statement2016_donors.pdf)
- (7) <http://www.nogameschicago.com>

