

The Supreme Court Redraws the Lines for Corruption Prosecutions

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The Ferrari carrying former Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell appears to have made a U-turn this week on its way to the federal penitentiary. Supreme Court's decision in *McDonnell v. United States*, which vacated Governor McDonnell's conviction redraws the lines for corruption prosecutions. The Court held a public official does not violate federal law simply by taking a benefit in exchange for arranging a meeting with or providing access to public officials and employees, or asking those employees to consider an issue. Instead, the official must take action or make a decision, or agree to do so, on a specific and focused matter that involves a formal exercise of government power, including advising or pressuring others to take an action or make a decision. But, the consequences of *McDonnell* should not be exaggerated.

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