

FAMILYWEALTHREPORT

Oversight Threat "Biggest Concern" For Family Offices - Handler Thayer

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The prospect of new federal oversight of family and multifamily offices will be a central theme at next week's Family Wealth Alliance CEO Roundtable, said Thomas Handler, partner in Chicago-based law firm [Handler Thayer](#) and chairman of the firm's Advanced Planning & Family Office group.

"The single biggest concern facing family offices today is the looming onslaught of invasive Federal regulatory oversight by major government agencies, the resulting loss of privacy and confidentiality, and the very significant related costs of compliance, audits and defense," Handler told *Family Wealth Report*.

"Families are alarmed and extremely concerned at the prospect of largely autonomous, all-powerful Federal agencies further intruding into their personal lives, businesses and investments," Handler added.

The regulatory concerns, according to Handler, stem largely from proposals to give the Securities and Exchange Commission oversight authority over family offices and recent IRS initiatives to audit international tax compliance by wealthy Americans now focused on Switzerland and Asia.

Other proposals involve additional oversight of family offices by FINRA, the CFTC, and other various bank/lending regulatory bodies.

"All such proposals are being received as unwelcome and unnecessary," Handler said. "Families don't want the Federal government interfering in what they perceive as private family business."

Family offices are also increasingly focused on comprehensive risk management, particularly insurance coverage, captive insurance companies, premarital planning and asset protection planning, said Handler, who will speak at the Family Wealth Alliance conference in Oakbrook, Illinois.

"As the family office industry continues to develop and mature, increasing resources are being directed toward achieving comprehensive risk management as a key component in long-term wealth management," he said.