

WISCONSIN STATE
LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE HEARING
RECORDS

2005-06

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on
Agriculture and
Insurance
(SC-AI)

File Naming Example:

Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

- 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt01a
- 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt01b
- 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt02

Published Documents

➤ Committee Hearings ... CH (Public Hearing Announcements)

➤ **

➤ Committee Reports ... CR

➤ **

➤ Executive Sessions ... ES

➤ **

➤ Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

➤ **

*Information Collected For Or
Against Proposal*

➤ Appointments ... Appt

➤ **

➤ Clearinghouse Rules ... CRule

**

➤ Hearing Records ... HR (bills and resolutions)

➤ **05hr_sb0137_SC-AI_pt01**

➤ Miscellaneous ... Misc

➤ **

LA CROSSE Tribune

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Talking Points: Lobbying by former legislators at issue

By TOM SHEEHAN / Tribune Capitol bureau

MADISON — The halls outside the Assembly Chambers at the state Capitol last Thursday looked like the backstage scene at a reunion tour of former legislative stars. Turns out, it was more of a benefit concert for Wisconsin's paper industry.

Four recently parted top legislators made appearances working as lobbyists for paper companies that want to force insurance companies to cover the cleanup costs of PCB contamination in the Fox River.

While some of the former legislators didn't do as well as they had hoped at seeking office, they apparently did well for the paper companies. The Assembly passed the "fair claims act" by a 49-44 vote. The bill now is headed to the Senate, where it's again likely to draw more attention from lobbyists.

But should legislators be allowed to join the ranks of lobbyists so soon after leaving office?

Of course, the trend of legislators becoming lobbyists is nothing new. The money is more lucrative than the \$45,569-a-year state salary. But three of the four working on behalf of paper companies last week wouldn't have been able to make the switch so soon under a bill introduced Monday in the Assembly.

State Rep. Stephen Freese, R-Dodgeville, said he wants legislators to wait at least a year before they can lobby their former colleagues.

"They'd have to go into a real job for a year before they could come back and influence the Legislature," Freese said.

Freese's bill would have prohibited former Senate Majority Leader Mary Panzer, R-West Bend, former Assembly Majority Leader Tim Foti, R-Oconomowoc, and former Sen. President Pro Tem and Joint Finance Committee member Bob Welch, R-Redgranite, from lobbying the fair claims bill.

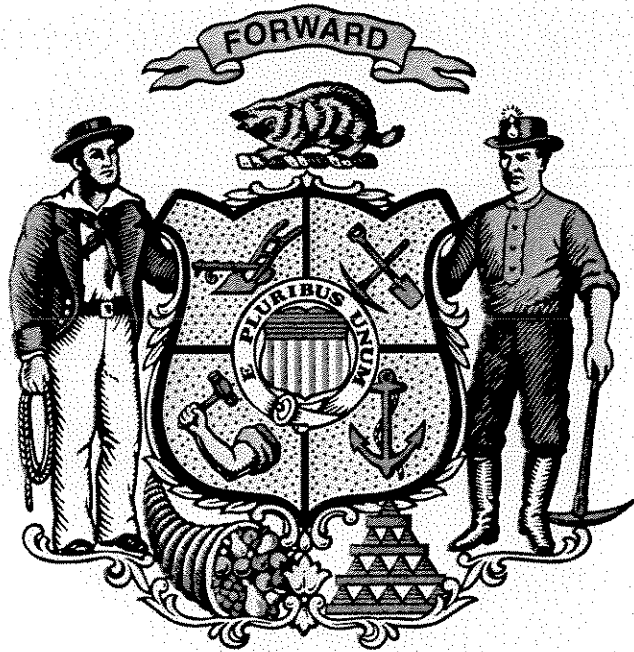
Panzer is registered with the Wisconsin Ethics Board to lobby on behalf of Arjo Wiggins Appleton Limited, a Paris-based paper manufacturer. Foti and Welch are registered to lobby for Georgia Pacific Corp.

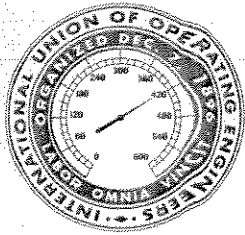
Foti, who did not seek re-election, and Panzer, who was defeated in a Republican primary for her former seat last year, would have had to wait until January 2006 to lobby under Freese's bill. Welch, who left office last year in an unsuccessful bid for Congress, would have had to wait until November 2005 to lobby.

Under Freese's bill, enough time would have passed to allow two other recently turned former legislators working the fair claims act to lobby, however. Former Sen. Brian Burke, D-Milwaukee, and former Rep. Tim Hoven, R-Port Washington, who both held office until Jan. 6, 2003, would have made the deadline. Burke lobbied on behalf of Arjo Wiggins; Hoven worked the other side of the issue on behalf of the Wisconsin Insurance Alliance.

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TERRANCE E. McGOWAN
Business Manager

August 24, 2005

Dear Senate Committee on Insurance Member:

RE: AB-222, SB-137

Operating Engineers Local 139 supports efforts to clean up the Fox River in northeastern Wisconsin. This issue has been discussed for many years and it looks like we are getting closer to some major action actually being taken.

Unfortunately, there still continues to be a dispute over how to actually finance the cleanup and without legislative action we fear that deadlock will continue. We believe AB-222 and the Senate companion bill SB-137 will help to break that deadlock!

The Operating Engineers are ready to go to work to get the cleanup done in a clean, efficient, cost-efficient manner. Your support for AB-222 and SB-137 will help us accomplish that!

Sincerely,

Terry McGowan
Business Manager

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