



State of Wisconsin
2017 - 2018 LEGISLATURE

LRB-0544/1
JK:klm

2017 ASSEMBLY BILL 976

February 26, 2018 - Introduced by Representatives C. TAYLOR, SUBECK, BERCEAU, CROWLEY, SINICKI, KOLSTE, HESSELBEIN, ANDERSON and SARGENT, cosponsored by Senators RINGHAND and VINEHOUT. Referred to Committee on Constitution and Ethics.

1 **AN ACT to amend** 13.62 (8), 13.62 (10), 19.56 (2) (a) and 19.579 (1); and **to create**
2 19.56 (2m) of the statutes; **relating to:** attempts to influence action upon model
3 or similar proposed legislation, reporting by certain persons providing or state
4 public officials receiving certain things of value, and providing a criminal
5 penalty.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Currently, with certain exceptions, a person who employs a lobbyist (principal) must register and file semiannual itemized expense statements with the ethics commission. A lobbyist is a person who is retained by a principal and whose duties include attempting to influence state legislative action or rule making by oral or written communication, on behalf of the principal, with an elective state official, agency official, or legislative employee in this state.

Subject to the current exceptions, this bill requires registration and the filing of expense statements, in addition, by a principal who attempts to influence the development, drafting, consideration, modification, adoption, rejection, or defeat of uniform, model, suggested, or recommended legislation for consideration by the legislatures of this state and other states. The bill also requires registration and the filing of expense statements by a principal who disseminates uniform, model, suggested, or recommended legislation to any elected state official or to any state agency or legislative employee. Violators are subject to a forfeiture (civil penalty) of not more than \$5,000 for each violation. A principal filing a statement that the

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principal does not believe is true is guilty of a felony and may be fined not more than \$10,000 or imprisoned for not more than six years, or both.

Currently, with certain exceptions, each state public official who is required to file an annual statement of economic interests with the ethics commission and who receives for a published work or for the presentation of a talk or participation in a meeting, any thing of pecuniary value exceeding a total of \$50, excluding the value of food or beverages offered coincidentally with a talk or meeting, must report, on his or her statement, the identity of every person from whom the official receives the thing of value, the circumstances under which it is received, and the approximate value thereof.

The bill specifically extends this reporting requirement to each state public official who is required to file statements of economic interests and who receives for attendance at a meeting or conference any thing of pecuniary value for scholarship purposes and requires statements concerning things of value received to indicate whether a thing of value was received for scholarship purposes. In addition, a state public official must include in his or her statement of economic interests the amount of any reimbursement from a campaign account that the official received for any fees, lodging, transportation, food, or beverages in connection with attendance at a meeting or conference.

The bill also requires each person who provides any thing of value to a member of the legislature for scholarship purposes to file a report with the ethics commission, in the manner and form specified by the commission, within 90 days after the thing of value is provided, disclosing the name of each member who received the thing of value together with the name of any legislative employee or state agency official who received any thing of value in connection with the same transaction or occurrence, the date that the thing of value was provided, and the names of any persons who contributed money to the person for the purpose of providing the thing of value within the 12-month period preceding the date on which the thing of value is provided. Currently, there is no similar requirement.

Violators of either of the above reporting requirements are subject to a forfeiture of not more than \$500 for each violation. Intentional violators are guilty of a misdemeanor and are subject to a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$5,000 or imprisonment for not more than one year, or both.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

- 1 **SECTION 1.** 13.62 (8) of the statutes is amended to read:
- 2 13.62 (8) “Legislative action” means the development, drafting, introduction,
- 3 consideration, modification, adoption, rejection, review, enactment or defeat of any
- 4 bill, resolution, amendment, report, nomination, proposed administrative rule or

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1 other matter by the legislature or by either house or any committee, subcommittee,
2 joint or select committee thereof, or by a legislator or employee of the legislature
3 acting in an official capacity. “Legislative action” also means the action of the
4 governor in approving or vetoing any bill or portion thereof, and the action of the
5 governor or any agency in the development of a proposal for introduction in the
6 legislature. “Legislative action” also includes the development, drafting,
7 consideration, modification, adoption, rejection, or defeat of uniform, model,
8 suggested, or recommended legislation by any body that recommends proposed
9 legislation for consideration by the legislatures of this state and other states.

10 **SECTION 2.** 13.62 (10) of the statutes is amended to read:

11 13.62 (10) “Lobbying” means the practice of attempting to influence legislative
12 or administrative action by oral or written communication with any elective state
13 official, agency official or legislative employee, and includes time spent in
14 preparation for such communication and appearances at public hearings or meetings
15 or service on a committee in which such preparation or communication occurs.
16 “Lobbying” also includes disseminating uniform, model, suggested, or recommended
17 legislation to any elected state official or to any state agency or legislative employee.

18 **SECTION 3.** 19.56 (2) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

19 19.56 (2) (a) Except as provided in par. (b), every official required to file who
20 receives for a published work or for the presentation of a talk or participation in a
21 meeting, any lodging, transportation, money or other thing with a combined
22 pecuniary value exceeding \$50 excluding the value of food or beverage offered
23 coincidentally with a talk or meeting and every official required to file who receives
24 for attendance at a meeting or conference any thing of pecuniary value for
25 scholarship purposes shall, on his or her statement of economic interests, report the

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1 identity of every person from whom the official receives such lodging, transportation,
2 money or other thing during his or her preceding taxable year, the circumstances
3 under which it was received ~~and~~, the approximate value thereof, and whether the
4 thing of value was received for scholarship purposes. The official shall also report
5 the amount of any reimbursement from a campaign account that the official received
6 for any fees, lodging, transportation, food, or beverages in connection with
7 attendance at a meeting or conference.

8 **SECTION 4.** 19.56 (2m) of the statutes is created to read:

9 19.56 **(2m)** Each person who provides any thing of value to a member of the
10 legislature for scholarship purposes shall file a report with the commission, in the
11 manner and form specified by the commission, within 90 days after the thing of value
12 is provided, disclosing the name of each member who received the thing of value
13 together with the name of any legislative employee or agency official who received
14 any thing of value in connection with the same transaction or occurrence, the date
15 that the thing of value was provided, and the names of any persons who contributed
16 money to the person for the purpose of providing the thing of value within the
17 12-month period preceding the date on which the thing of value is provided.

18 **SECTION 5.** 19.579 (1) of the statutes is amended to read:

19 19.579 **(1)** Except as provided in sub. (2), any person who violates this
20 subchapter may be required to forfeit not more than \$500 for each violation of s.
21 19.43, 19.44, or 19.56 (2) or (2m) or not more than \$5,000 for each violation of any
22 other provision of this subchapter. If the court determines that the accused has
23 realized economic gain as a result of the violation, the court may, in addition, order
24 the accused to forfeit the amount gained as a result of the violation. In addition, if
25 the court determines that a state public official has violated s. 19.45 (13), the court

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1 may order the official to forfeit an amount equal to the amount or value of any
2 political contribution, service, or other thing of value that was wrongfully obtained.
3 If the court determines that a state public official has violated s. 19.45 (13) and no
4 political contribution, service, or other thing of value was obtained, the court may
5 order the official to forfeit an amount equal to the maximum contribution authorized
6 under s. 11.1101 (1) for the office held or sought by the official, whichever amount is
7 greater. The attorney general, when so requested by the commission, shall institute
8 proceedings to recover any forfeiture incurred under this section which is not paid
9 by the person against whom it is assessed.

10 SECTION 6. Initial applicability.

11 (1) The treatment of section 13.62 (8) and (10) of the statutes first applies with
12 respect to lobbying that occurs on the first day of the 2nd month beginning after the
13 effective date of this subsection.

14 (2) The treatment of section 19.56 (2) (a) of the statutes first applies with
15 respect to things of value received on the effective date of this subsection.

16 (3) The treatment of sections 19.56 (2m) and 19.579 (1) of the statutes first
17 applies with respect to things of value provided on the first day of the 2nd month
18 beginning after the effective date of this subsection.

19 (END)