



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STAFF MEMORANDUM

Memo No. 6

TO: MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON STATE-TRIBAL RELATIONS

FROM: David L. Lovell, Senior Analyst

RE: Lobbying Activity on Bills Introduced in the 2005-06 Legislative Session at the Recommendation of the 2004-06 Special Committee

DATE: December 29, 2006

This Memo responds to the request made at the Special Committee's November 14, 2006 meeting for information regarding lobbying activity on bills introduced in the 2005-06 Legislative Session at the 2004-06 Special Committee's recommendation. It provides detailed information, in tabular form, of lobbying activities reported to the Wisconsin Ethics Board (the Board) and describes available information regarding appearances at committee hearings.

Ethics Board Information

Lobbyists are required to obtain a license to lobby from the Board. An entity that employs a lobbyist (termed a "principal") is required to register with the Board, stating what agencies it intends to lobby and the subject matter of the lobbying, including specific bill numbers. A principal must report a variety of information regarding lobbying done on its behalf, including the aggregate cost incurred and time spent lobbying. A principal is not required to report the hours spent lobbying on individual bills, but is required to report the percentage of the time spent lobbying on any proposal if the principal estimates that percentage to be at least 10% of the aggregate total of all lobbying done for that principal.

The registration requirements do not apply to a principal that incurs no more than \$500 in lobbying expenses in a year. There is no parallel threshold below which lobbyists are not required to have a license. The licensing and reporting requirements do not apply to elected state, local, and tribal officials and certain employees, although the exception for tribal officials did not take effect until June 10, 2006, after the Legislature had completed its work for the 2005-06 Session.

On its web site, the Board maintains a data base of lobbying records. Though not required, it gives principals the opportunity to state a position regarding an individual proposal, that is, for, against, or undecided. Also not required, the Board gives principals the opportunity to report the hours spent

lobbying on individual proposals. Principals often take advantage of the opportunity to state a position on a proposal, but report hours of lobbying less frequently.

The enclosed table identifies the principals that registered to lobby on each of the bills and shows what position they specified and, when reported, the hours of lobbying activity for each bill.

Lobbying records can be accessed from the Board's home page at <http://www.ethics.state.wi.us>; click on the picture to the left of "Lobbying in Wisconsin" and then scroll down to "Lobbying Effort 2005-06." This portion of the web site offers a number of ways to sort and view lobbying records.

Committee Records

Persons who attend public hearings held by a standing committee on pending legislation have several options. They may: speak for or against the legislation; speak for information only, neither for nor against; register for or against the legislation; or simply observe the hearing without being recorded as present. In all but the last instance, the person completes a form identifying himself or herself and his or her affiliation and indicating which option he or she has selected. The committee clerk compiles this information and includes it in the committee's report on the legislation.

This Memo does not present information from the committee records in detail, because it would be rather voluminous and is duplicative of much of the information reported from the Ethics Board's records. A comparison of the enclosed table and the committee records shows that most of the same entities that reported lobbying activities on each bill also attended hearings on the bills, speaking or registering with the same positions as indicated in the lobbying records.

Committee records can be accessed from the Legislature's home page, at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us>; click first on "Searchable Infobase" and then on "27. Committee Records."

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Enclosure