

State of Wisconsin

SENATE CHAIR
Alberta Darling

317 East, State Capitol
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Phone: (608) 266-5830



ASSEMBLY CHAIR
John Nygren

308 East, State Capitol
P.O. Box 8593
Madison, WI 53708-8953
Phone: (608) 266-2343

Joint Committee on Finance

MEMORANDUM

To: Members
Joint Committee on Finance

From: Senator Alberta Darling
Representative John Nygren

Date: May 19, 2020

Re: s. 16.515/16.505(2), Stats. Request

Attached is a copy of a request from the Department of Administration, received May 19, 2020, pursuant to s. 16.515/16.505(2), Stats., on behalf of the Ethics Commission.

Please review the material and notify **Senator Darling** or **Representative Nygren** no later than **Monday, June 8, 2020**, if you have any concerns about the request or if you would like the Committee to meet formally to consider it.

Also, please contact us if you need further information.

Attachments

AD:JN:jm



STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Tony Evers, Governor
Joel Brennan, Secretary

Date: May 19, 2020

To: The Honorable Alberta Darling, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Finance

The Honorable John Nygren, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Finance

From: Joel T. Brennan, Secretary
Department of Administration

MAY 19 2020

JT. FINANCE

Subject: s. 16.515/16.505(2) Request(s)

Enclosed are request(s) that have been approved by this department under the authority granted in s. 16.515 and s. 16.505(2). The explanation for each request is included in the attached materials. Listed below is a summary of each item:

<u>AGENCY</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>2019-20</u>		<u>2020-21</u>	
		<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FTE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FTE</u>
Ethics 20.521(1)(im)	Lobbying administration; program revenue	\$20,000	0.0	\$0	0.0

As provided in s. 16.515, the request(s) will be approved on June 10, 2020, unless we are notified prior to that time that the Joint Committee on Finance wishes to meet in formal session about any of the requests.

Please contact Kirsten Grinde at 266-1353, or the analyst who reviewed the request in the Division of Executive Budget and Finance, if you have any additional questions.

Attachments



STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Tony Evers, Governor
Joel Brennan, Secretary
Brian Pahnke, Administrator

Date: May 18, 2020

To: Joel Brennan, Secretary
Department of Administration

From: Matthew Bork
Executive Policy and Budget Analyst

Subject: Request under s. 16.515 from the Ethics Commission for increased expenditure authority to modernize the lobbying reporting Web site.

Request:

The Ethics Commission requests additional expenditure authority of \$20,000 PR in fiscal year 2019-20 in the lobbying administration appropriation under s. 20.521(1)(im).

Revenue Source for Appropriation:

The program revenue appropriation under s. 20.521(1)(im) is funded from fees paid by lobbyists and principals who register to lobby in the state of Wisconsin. The revenue from the fees funds the maintenance and support of the lobbying program and Web site.

Background:

The Ethics Commission operates a Web site that allows lobbyists to obtain their licenses, principals to register and complete required reporting, and users to subscribe to notification services. The public can also use the Web site to view lobbying activities and expenditures. The Web site was created in 2012 and has been maintained with funds from the lobbying administration appropriation.

Through surveys and feedback from those using the Web site, the Ethics Commission staff identified updates needed for the Web site. In particular, the commission would like to make the Web site compatible with mobile devices so that those using the Web site, particularly lobbyists attempting to report activities, can do so with a mobile device. In working with the Web and Mobile Solutions group, the commission has begun a multistage process to implement the updates.

The changes are divided into three main phases. In fiscal year 2018-19, the commission worked with a user experience team to identify the issues. In fiscal year 2019-20, the Web and Mobile Solutions team began making changes and updates to the database, which the team anticipates will be done this summer. The third and final phase will be making updates to the administrative functions of the Web site, which will be completed during fiscal year 2020-21.

The total cost of the project is expected to be between \$125,000 and \$150,000. In fiscal year 2018-19, the commission spent \$14,800 using existing expenditure authority. In fiscal year 2019-20, as of April 27, the commission has spent \$55,860 and has budgeted another \$14,840 using existing expenditure authority, for a total of \$70,700 in fiscal year 2019-20. The commission is requesting an additional \$20,000 of expenditure authority in fiscal year 2019-20 to complete the lobbying user components of the Web site. The commission estimates it would spend between \$19,000 and \$44,000 in fiscal year 2020-21, within its current budget, to complete the remaining components.

Analysis:

The current balance of the appropriation is approximately \$682,000, with \$477,800 in expenditure authority for fiscal year 2019-20 and \$478,300 in fiscal year 2020-21. Therefore, there is sufficient revenue to cover the requested expenditure authority even if there were to be a decline in revenue resulting from the coronavirus pandemic.

The commission has reported that it has budgeted approximately \$70,700 for the project in fiscal year 2019-20, and \$44,300 in fiscal year 2020-21. Commission staff have acknowledged that it would theoretically be possible to incur the expenses in fiscal year 2020-21; however, the commission's strong preference is to not delay the planned expenditures until fiscal year 2020-21 because project training and consequently, the overall deadline, would be delayed and due to concerns that budgets may be reduced in fiscal year 2020-21.

The commission states that it is critical for this part of the project to be completed on time so that staff can begin training users on the new Web site prior to the next legislative session in January of 2021. The commission intends to begin launching the Web site and training users between now and the end of fall. Maintaining this timeline is important because users currently have time to be trained on the new Web site prior to their busiest time, during the legislative session and budget season. There are currently 677 lobbyists and 792 principal organizations with a total of approximately 3,600 users that must be trained to use the Web site before its scheduled go-live in October 2020. Users will need to become licensed and authorized for the legislative session by using the new Web site beginning in December. It is therefore important that principals and lobbyists can be trained prior to December, ensuring they can accurately report their time using the new site. Denying the request would delay the project and would likely push the roll-out beyond the start of the next legislative session, which may result in users not having time to be trained before they would be required to use the new Web site.

Recommendation:

Approve the request.

Date: May 18, 2020
To: Brian Pahnke
From: Matthew Bork
 Executive Policy and Budget Analyst
Subject: Section 16.515/16.505(2) Request(s)

Attached is a s. 16.515 request analysis for your approval and processing. Listed below is a summary of each item:

DOA RECOMMENDATION:

<u>AGENCY</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>2019-20</u>		<u>2020-21</u>	
		<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FTE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FTE</u>
Ethics 20.521(1)(im)	Lobbying administration; program revenue	\$20,000	0.0	\$0	0.0

AGENCY REQUEST:

<u>AGENCY</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>2019-20</u>		<u>2020-21</u>	
		<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FTE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FTE</u>
Ethics 20.521(1)(im)	Lobbying administration; program revenue	\$20,000	0.0	\$0	0.0

BP APPROVAL BP (FORWARD TO GAIL TAPPEN)



Wisconsin Ethics Commission

Campaign Finance | Lobbying | Ethics
101 East Wilson Street | Suite 127 | P.O. Box 7125 | Madison, WI 53703-7125
(608) 266-8123 | ethics@wi.gov | <https://ethics.wi.gov>

DATE: April 27, 2020

TO: Brian Pahnke, Administrator
Division of Executive Budget and Finance
Department of Administration

FROM: Daniel Carlton, Administrator
Wisconsin Ethics Commission

SUBJECT: 16.515 Request for Increase in Expenditure Authority to Modernize Lobbying Reporting Website

Request

The Wisconsin Ethics Commission requests an increase in expenditure authority to complete work to modernize the lobbying reporting website, <https://lobbying.wi.gov>. The project is funded entirely from the agency program revenue appropriation WIS. STAT. § 20.521(1)(im). The Ethics Commission is requesting a one-time increase in expenditure authority of \$20,000 in FY2020. The modernized website will be more technologically sound, allow for more accurate reporting by lobbyists and principals, improve the Commission's auditing capabilities, and provide a more user-friendly experience for the public. Approval of this request will allow the Commission to complete the portions of the website that are used by lobbyists, principals, and the public this summer. The Commission's staff will be able to test, launch, and train users on the modernized site before the beginning of the 2021-2023 session of the Legislature.

Revenue Source

The funds for this project are generated from fees paid by lobbyists and principals who register to lobby in the state of Wisconsin, per WIS. STAT. § 13.75. The revenue from these fees funds the maintenance and support of our lobbying program which includes the lobbying website. Lobbyists and principals are required to regularly report their time and expenses on lobbying activity using the lobbying website. The current balance in WIS. STAT. § 20.521(1)(im) is approximately \$682,000.

Background

The current lobbying website launched in late 2012 allows lobbyists to obtain their licenses, principals to register, completion of 15-day and 6-month reports as required by statute, and allows users to subscribe to the FOCUS notification service. The website is also used by the public, legislators, agency officials, and their staff to view lobbying activities and expenditures. Since the site launched in 2012, basic maintenance has kept the site functioning as needed. As smart phones become a more common way to access the internet, there is a growing need among the lobbying

Wisconsin Ethics Commissioners

Paul Connell | Mac Davis | David R. Halbrooks | Scot Ross | Pat Strachota | Timothy Van Akkeren

Administrator

Daniel A. Carlton, Jr.

community for the website to be available in a mobile format. Currently the site is not optimized for use on mobile devices. Many lobbyists have requested the site to be available as an app or at least mobile friendly, so they may report activities when away from a desktop computer. The changes being made are going to be based upon modern coding techniques that result in a more user-friendly experience, provide more accurate reporting, and improve transparency for the public.

The Ethics Commission staff identified the need to modernize the lobbying website based on feedback and a survey of the regulated community. Ethics Commission staff began working with UW-Madison's Division of Information Technology (DoIT) User Experience group and the Web and Mobile Solutions (WaMS) group to identify necessary changes to the website, including making it mobile-responsive and intuitively designed. Changes to the website will also enhance reporting and provide a user dashboard. The methodology for this project was initially exploratory. Staff worked with the User Experience group at DoIT to understand how users currently use the site, and how to improve navigation. After those changes were identified, the WaMS team developed a plan to implement changes to the site.

This request will pay for a portion of the work of the developers to implement changes identified in earlier stages of the project. The project is following an iterative process, meaning it has been implemented in phases, and as each phase is completed, the next steps are identified prior to beginning the work. An iterative process allows for any issues discovered in early phases to be accommodated in later phases of the project. However, this also means that budgeting for this project has been challenging, as it was initially unclear exactly how many phases would be needed to complete the project.

In working with the WaMS team we have divided the project into three main phases. In FY2019, during our exploratory phase, the User Experience team identified site navigation issues, interviewed members of the regulated community, and developed site plans that address common issues. In FY2020, the WaMS team made structural changes to the architecture of the database to address technical debt and vulnerabilities and will complete the reporting and public disclosure functions of the website by summer 2020. The last phase of the project will make updates to the administrative functions of the website. The last phase of the project will be completed during FY2021, within existing expenditure authority of lobbying program revenue.

The full expected cost for this project will range from \$125,000 to \$150,000. The Ethics Commission spent \$14,800 in FY2019 towards this project, within existing expenditure authority. In FY2020, as of April 27, 2020, the Commission has spent \$55,860 on this project within existing expenditure authority, and has budgeted another \$14,840 to be spent from existing expenditure authority. Current expenditure authority for this appropriation is insufficient to complete the second phase of the project prior to the end of FY2020. If approved, this request would add an additional \$20,000 to the expenditure authority for lobbying program revenue in FY2020 to complete the lobbying user components of the website. It is critical to complete this phase of the project in 2020, in order to provide communication and training of the new site to the lobbying community prior to the next legislative session, which begins January 1, 2021.

	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021
Expenses within expenditure authority	\$14,800	\$70,900	\$19,300 to \$44,300
Request for additional expenditure authority		\$20,000	

The Ethics Commission is pursuing this process rather than through the 2019-2021 biennial budget process due to the iterative nature of the project. Prior to this point, the amount of work required to make the changes and a specific timeline for when this project would be completed were both unclear. Due to the timing of this project and the biennial budget process, we did not have sufficient information to make an informed request for funds through the prior biennial budget process. We are now at a point where we can make a specific and accurate assessment of how much the remainder of this project will cost, and therefore can make an informed request for this amount of increase in expenditure authority.