

PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION FOR GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, (PAGR) PRINCIPLES FOR A NEW LOBBYING LAW

General

- Lobbying must be defined as the attempt to influence official decisions of a state official or employee, and also as the providing of gifts, entertainment, meals, transportation or hospitality to those officials or employees.
- The names of lobbyists and the interests they represent must be available to the general public, along with reports on certain expenditures lobbyists, lobbying firms and principals make.
- The reporting requirements must be such that they do not violate an attorney's duties and responsibilities to his/her clients.

Registration and Reporting

- All lobbyists, principals and lobbying firms must register.
- Registrants must report all gifts, entertainment, meals, transportation and hospitality provided to any state official or employee, or their immediate family. The report must include the name of the official, employee, or family member, the amount of the expenditure and the nature of the expenditure.
- All expenditures for gifts, entertainment, meals, transportation or hospitality must be reported with no minimum threshold.
- Costs for public relations and advertising campaigns must also be reported.
- Reports should be made semi-annually.
- Agencies of state government are not to be considered to be lobbyists or principals.
- No reporting is required for any principal that does not reach the minimum required expenditure level for registration.
- Registration fees are placed on lobbyists and lobbying firms only, not on principals.
- Exemptions from registration and reporting should include lobbyists who receive no compensation and organizations that spend less than a specified amount each year on lobbying.

Administration and Enforcement

- Administration of the lobbying law should be given to the Department of State.
- Regulations to implement the law should be drafted by the Department with input from legislators, lobbyists and the public.
- Disciplinary procedures under the law must guarantee due process and contain no presumption of guilt.
- Audits should to be done randomly.
- Enforcement proceedings are to be confidential unless waived by the subject of the proceeding.
- Compliance with the registration and reporting requirements of the law should be as simple as possible since many registrants are non-profit or very small organizations with little or no staff resources.
- Contingent fees and combining lobbying fees and political contributions must be prohibited.