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Proposal 5:
REQUIRE ELECTRONIC FILING OF ALL LOBBYING FILINGS

ISSUE

Many lobbyists and clients file lobbying statements and reports via paper, which increases the burden on staff and delays transparency of lobbying activity.

Although the majority of lobbyists and clients choose to file their lobbying reports using the Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government's online filing system maintained for this purpose, the Commission still receives approximately 1,000 lobbying filings each year. These paper filings create an administrative burden for the agency, as staff must then enter the lobbying data into the online filing system by hand, which is very time-consuming. Since lobbying filings are not public until they are entered into the Commission's online filing system, the continued use of paper filings delays transparency to the public surrounding lobbying activity. Lobbying filings submitted using the Commission's online filing system, however, are available to the public immediately upon submission.

SOLUTION

Require electronic submission of all lobbying filings.

Amend the Lobbying Act in sections 1-(d)(e)(h)(i)(j) and (l) to require electronic filing of all lobbying reports. This proposal would ease the administrative burden created by the submission of paper filings and promote transparency of lobbying activity by ensuring that all lobbying filings are available to the public upon submission to the Commission.

Please note, draft bill language is available upon request.

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