Summary

Lobbyists and interest groups play an active role in the American legislative process. Information on lobbyist registrations and on interest groups in general is available from a variety of online and printed sources, including files available for public inspection.

This report is a guide for locating governmental sources that maintain files on lobby groups, their registrations, and finances. Also included in this report are nongovernmental sources that offer background information on the lobbyists and interest groups who focus on legislation in Washington. Many of the works listed are available to congressional staff in the Jefferson and La Follette Congressional Reading Rooms, CRS research centers, and to constituents in large public and research libraries.

This report will be updated yearly or if current lobbying regulations are changed by Congress.


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1 This report was originally authored by Mari-Jana “M-J” Oboroceanu, who no longer covers this issue.
the name of the registrant (firm or individual), client, and broad issue area in which lobbying was carried out.

Both the Clerk of the House of Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate receive and maintain the lobby registrations and semiannual disclosure reports of those filing as lobbyists under the LDA. The offices also maintain the records previously required under the Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act of 1946. That law was repealed by the LDA.

**Governmental Sources**

**Clerk of the House of Representatives**
Legislative Resource Center
B106 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-0515
(202) 226-5200

The filings beginning with 1989 to present are available for public inspection at the location given above. The House website [http://clerk.house.gov/pd/index.html] provides information about the records but does not provide online access to the records themselves.

**Secretary of the Senate**
Office of Public Records
232 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-7116
(202) 224-0758

The Senate Office of Public Records provides onsite access to the public to filings beginning with 1996 at the location given above. The filings beginning with 1998 are available on its website at [http://sopr.senate.gov].

**FARA Registration Unit Public Office**
U.S. Department of Justice
FARA Registration Unit
1400 New York Avenue, N.W., Suite 100
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 514-1145

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2 A “client” is defined under LDA as any person or entity that employs and compensates another person to conduct lobbying activities on behalf of that person or entity. A coalition or association may also be listed as a client. LDA does not require information on the specific membership of these groups to be disclosed. Some observers suggest that this could allow entities to shield their lobbying activities through the use of ostensibly separate, independent coalitions and associations. Consequently, when the client is an association or coalition, the interested parties may not be identified in LDA disclosure reports. For further information, see CRS Report RL33798, *Lobbying Disclosure: Themes, Issues, and Legislative Consideration, 110th Congress*, by R. Eric Petersen.
The Department of Justice’s Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) Unit receives registrations and financial information of agents representing foreign governments or political parties in the United States as required by the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended. The records can be inspected by the public at the above address. Online lobbyist registrations can be accessed at [http://www.usdoj.gov/criminal/fara]. Currently FARA semiannual reports to Congress available online date back to 1997, and the most recent one is dated December 31, 2005.

**GPO Access**
GPO Access User Support Team  
Superintendent of Documents  
U.S. Government Printing Office  
732 North Capitol Street, N.W., Mail Stop: SDE  
Washington, DC 20401  
(202) 512-1530; main GPO telephone (866) 512-1800

GPO Access provides online access to the *Congressional Record Index*, which can be used to search for pre-1996 lobbyist registrations at [http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cri/index.html]. Also available are the full texts of many legislative resources, including the *Congressional Record*.

**Legislative Information System (LIS)**  
User Support can be obtained by calling:  
CRS Hotline: (202) 707-7100  
Senate Library (202) 224-7106  
House Call Center (202) 225-6002  
GAO Library (202) 512-2585

LIS is the legislative and congressional information system available to the Capitol Hill Intranet users at [http://www.congress.gov]. It provides access to a variety of academic, commercial, and governmental information sources. Among its contents is the full text from 1989 to present of the *Congressional Record*, in which periodic listings of lobbyists registrations were printed before 1996.

**Nongovernmental Sources**

**American League of Lobbyists (ALL)**  
P.O. Box 30005  
Alexandria, VA 22310  
(703) 960-3011

The American League of Lobbyists is a membership group of registered lobbyists and other professionals interested in lobbying. It works to improve the public image of lobbyists, monitors lobby legislation, and conducts educational programs on the role of lobbyists. The ALL website can be accessed at [http://www.alldc.org].

**The Capital Source.** Washington, National Journal Group, Inc.  (Annual)

This directory provides limited coverage of government, media, and corporate officials. Its sections on interest groups, trade and professional associations, and political
consulting and lobbying firms list some Washington-based lobbying groups, with contact information and executive directors’ names. The list is arranged alphabetically by the name of the lobbying firm and does not contain areas of specialties.

Center for Responsive Politics (CRP)
1101 14th Street, N.W., Suite 1030
Washington, D.C. 20005-5635
(202) 857-0044

This website [http://www.opensecrets.org/lobbyists/index.asp] provides access to Influence, Inc., CRP’s annual lobbying report. It gives year-to-year comparisons of lobbying spending on Capitol Hill, background on the issue, lists of top spenders, and includes the political spending patterns of various industries. It also gives an industry-by-industry spending breakdown and has a searchable database of individual lobbyists, lobbying firms, and client businesses.

Encyclopedia of Associations. Farmington Hills, MI, Gale Group. (Annual)

This multi-volume listing of nonprofit American membership organizations of national scope is arranged by broad categories. It gives details on the location, size, objectives, and other aspects of some 22,000 trade associations, professional societies, interest groups, labor unions, and fraternal and patriotic organizations. It contains name, geographical, executive, and keyword indexes.


This directory profiles more than 22,000 government affairs experts who represent the interests of businesses, professional organizations, interest groups, and government institutions before federal, state, and local governments. Private organizations are listed alphabetically. Federal government organizations are listed alphabetically by department, and by agency. State, city, and county government sections are organized alphabetically by state, city, and county names, respectively. Each listing gives the organization’s name; address; contact; organizational description; any political action committee; the Washington, DC, office’s address and telephone number; lobbying firms representing the group on the federal, state, and municipal levels; and other pertinent details. This extensive listing provides subject, geographical, name, and organization indexes. Government Affairs Yellow Book is available online to subscribers as part of The Leadership Library on the Internet. This online resource that is updated daily can be accessed at [http://www.leadershipdirectories.com].

Legal Times: Law and Lobbying in the Nation’s Capital. Washington, Legal Times, part of American Lawyer Media, Inc. (Weekly)

This newspaper has articles on Washington’s law and lobbying communities. In June 2000, Legal Times launched its biweekly newsletter, Influence: The Business of Lobbying. It focuses on the business of lobbying, ranging from firm assignments and earnings to business strategies and mergers. Influence can be found on the Web as Influence Online at [http://www.influence.biz]. It has detailed lobby firm profiles and same-day reporting on new lobby registrations. Several portions of this electronic
resource are available only to subscribers, such as a biweekly newsletter, 24-hour access to Influence Online, and e-mail alerts on the latest registrations and breaking news.

**LexisNexis Group**
P.O. Box 933  
Dayton, OH 45401-0933  
(800) 227-9597

Lexis-Nexis subscribers have access to full-text coverage of the Congressional Record, which can be searched online for lobbyist registrations filed from 1985 to 1996 at [http://www.lexisnexis.com](http://www.lexisnexis.com).

**National Trade and Professional Associations of the United States.** Washington, Columbia Books, Inc. (Annual)

This directory lists more than 7,500 trade associations, labor unions, professional societies, and similar national groups. Many have offices in Washington, DC, that lobby on federal legislation of interest to their members. Among the details provided for each group are its annual budget, a brief history, and dates and sites of its annual conventions. It contains subject, geographic, budget, executive, and acronym indexes.

**Public Interest Group Profiles.** Washington, Congressional Quarterly, Inc. (Biennial)

This selective guide to more than 200 public interest and policy groups has been compiled by the Foundation for Public Affairs, which maintains a national, nonpartisan clearinghouse on public interest groups and corporate public affairs programs cooperatively with the Public Affairs Council. Each group’s profile includes basic details, as well as ratings of effectiveness and political orientation. Profiles are grouped into 12 subject categories.

**Washington.** Washington, Columbia Books, Inc. (Annual)

This work provides information on nearly 5,000 businesses, government agencies, national associations, international and national affairs organizations, law firms, and cultural organizations in the Washington, DC, area. It is arranged by broad subject categories, with brief listings of key officials in each entry. It also has a “National Affairs” section, which is a selective list of nonprofit activist organizations and special interest lobbying groups in the Washington area.

**Washington Information Directory.** Washington, Congressional Quarterly, Inc. (Annual)

This guide to Washington, DC, area governmental and private organizations is arranged in 20 broad subject areas. Under each area, pertinent federal departments and agencies, congressional committees, and private nonprofit organizations are listed.

**Washington Representatives.** Washington, Columbia Books, Inc. (Annual)

This is a list of 17,000 Washington contacts of U.S. trade associations, professional societies, labor unions, corporations, and various special interest and public interest
groups. This source has three main sections: the firms and the organizations they represent, the clients being represented, and the people who work for the firms or the listed organizations. In addition, Washington Representatives has four indexes. The first index is organized by clients by subject/industry. The second index helps the user to research foreign clients by country. The third index provides information on PACs (political action committees). The fourth index guides the user in the legislative areas and provides help in identifying clients and firms working in particular legislative issues. Washington Representatives can be accessed online at [http://www.lobbyists.info]. However, the searchable database is only available to subscribers.
Spread of information becomes easier through lobbying. Lobbyism may improve your job opportunities. In order to give firms this sort of incentive, it is crucial that politicians and interest groups talk to each other so that a suitable political framework regarding R&D can be assured. Can help industry leaders connect to politicians. Opponents of lobbying often claim that lobbyists have far too much power and that politicians have become puppets that are meant to serve the wishes and needs of big corporations. However, in most countries of our planet, politicians are still free human beings and have the power to make their own decisions. Opponents of interest groups and lobbying also often claim that lobbying is quite inefficient. Lobbyist. The term includes any of the following: (1) A person who receives compensation or reimbursement from another person, group, or entity to lobby. (2) A person who lobbies as a regular and usual part of employment, whether or not any compensation in addition to regular salary and benefits is received. A "volunteer lobbyist" means any individual who engages in lobbying and whose only receipt of money or other thing of value consists of nothing more than reimbursement for actual and reasonable expenses incurred for personal needs. Colo. Rev. Primary sources relate to direct sources of either quantitative or qualitative information that the acquirer obtains (collects and captures) through their own actions. Secondary sources refer to acquiring existing qualitative or quantitative data or information obtained from someone else without having to engage in direct contact, such as that which is gathered off the World-Wide Web from online resources. Social sources contain information derived from various forms of social media. A few entails Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Lobbyists and interest groups: Sources of information. Retrieved 2020, from https://www.senate.gov/reference/resources/pdf/RS20725.pdf. Further Reading. Black, A., Luna, P., Lund, O., & Walker, S. (Eds.). Lobbyists, lobbying firms, interest groups, and power all provide specific roles in the lobbying industry. Click here to see what each group does. Their most powerful source of persuasion is conveying the wishes of the voting public to legislators who want to stay in office or be re-elected. The role of lobbyist is nothing new, having been a part of the legislative environment since the era of the founders, when James Madison addressed the question in his Federalist papers. An interest group can be any organized group that represents a certain set of common needs or goals. These groups hire Washington lobbyists in order to influence the outcome of legislation that will affect their members in significant ways. In politics, lobbying, persuasion, or interest representation is the act of lawfully attempting to influence the actions, policies, or decisions of government officials, most often legislators or members of regulatory agencies. Lobby groups may concentrate their efforts on the legislatures, where laws are created, but may also use the judicial branch to advance their causes. Nevertheless, a recent parliamentary initiative (motion for a resolution) has been launched by several MPs so as to establish a register for representatives of interest groups and lobbyists who intend to lobby the MPs. Italy[edit]. Freedom of information laws by country. The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013. UK Bribery Act of 2010.