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Lobbying definition politics

A process of influencing public policy and governance at all levels: federal, state and local. Lobbying involves supporting the affected interest, in fact or potentially, by decisions made by government leaders. Individuals and interest groups alike can solicit governments, and governments can even solicit each other. The practice of lobbying is considered so crucial to the proper functioning of the U.S. government that it is specifically protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: Congress will not make any law... I don't know what to do. The right of the people in peace... Petition the government to amend complaints. The practice of lobbying provides a forum for resolving disputes between diverse and often competing perspectives; provides information, analysis and opinion to legislators and government leaders to enable informed and balanced decision-making; And creates a system of checks and balances that enables competition between interest groups, preventing each group from reaching a permanent position of power. Lobbyists can help the legislative process work more efficiently by providing reliable data and accurate assessments of the bill's effect. The role that lobbyists play in the legislative arena can be compared to that of lawyers in the judicial arena. Just as lawyers provide the terrier of facts (judge or jury) with perspectives on the legal issues concerning the case, so too do lobbyists provide local, state and federal policymakers with public policy perspectives. Although lobbying as a whole serves as a defense of checks and balances in the legislative process, individual lobbyists are not necessarily equal. Unlike voters, who each get one vote, lobbyists change in how they impact. The level of influence a lobbyist has on the legislative process is often proportional to the resources - time and money - the lobbyist can spend to achieve his legislative goal. Some people think lobbyists in general have too much power. During his 1912 presidential campaign, Woodrow Wilson said: The United States government is a foster child of special interests. He can't have a want of her own. The term lobbyist was traced back to the mid-17th century, when citizens gathered in a large lobby near the English House of Commons to express their views to MPs. In the early 1800s, the term lobby agent came to the United States, where it was applied to citizens seeking legislative favors in the lobby of the New York Capitol, in Albany. Until 1832 it was shortened to a lobbyist and was widely used in the U.S. Capitol. In the early 2000s, lobbyists practiced their trade not only in the halls of the U.S. Capitol and in state legislative corridors, but also in playgrounds, boardrooms, manufacturing plants, cocktail parties and ancestral fruits. Current lobbying methods include political action committees, communication techniques, coalitions between groups and industries that share the same political goals, and campaigns to mobilize voters at the grassroots level. Lobbyists include schoolchildren who want to prevent their favorite neighborhood park from becoming a shopping mall, corporations contributing to a certain lawmaker's campaign, lawyers speaking to lawmakers on behalf of their clients' business interests, cities lobbying state legislatures for changes to transportation laws, presidential aides offering new language to congressional committee members, pensioners who want to save their government benefits and many others. Every kind of lobbyist tries to win support for a certain point of view. Samuel Ward, a respected lobbyist, was so successful in influencing lawmakers that in the mid-19th century Congress decided to investigate him. When asked about the elegant meals he organized for politicians, the King of the Lobby said, at good dinners people don't talk about business, but they give people a right, perhaps, to ask a gentleman a civic question and get a civic answer. Despite the uncorrupted success of lobbyists like Ward, lobbyists in the mid-19th century were often considered ethically dubious people. That reputation was intensified whenever lobbyists abused their position with improper practices like bribing members of Congress. Although lobbying is particularly protected by the Constitution, numerous attempts have been made to regulate it - attempts that, unsurprisingly, lobbyists have historically resisted. Congress began lobbying reform efforts in 1907 when it banned campaign contributions from banks and corporations. In 1911, the proposed restrictions on local lobbying were first proposed, but these were not approved until 1946, when Congress passed the Federal Lobbying Act (2 U.S.C.A. §§ 261, 261 Note, 262-270 [1946]). In 1954, lobbyists challenged the lobbying law for being vague and constitutionally unclear. In U.S. v. Harris, 347 U.S. 612, 74 S. Ct. 808, 98 L. Ed. 989, the Supreme Court responded by upholding the constitutionality of the act, but also by reducing the scope and implementation of the act. The court ruled that the law applies only to paid lobbyists who communicate directly with members of Congress about pending or proposed federal legislation. This means that lobbyists visiting with members of congress staff rather than members of Congress themselves are not considered lobbyists. In addition, the bill only covers attempts to influence the passage or defeat of congressional legislation and excludes other congressional activities. Furthermore, the law applies and limits only people who spend at least half the time lobbying. Under the 1946 Act, lobbyists to whom the law applies are required to disclose their name and address; names and addresses of customers for whom they work; How They are paid and by whom; the names of all contributors to the lobbying effort and the death of their donations; accounts that add up all the money received and produced, indicating who it was paid for and for the same purposes; the names of all publications in which lobbyists published articles or editorials; And certain legislation they were hired to support or oppose. In addition, the bill requires lobbyists to submit registration forms with the House clerk and Senate secretary before engaging in lobbying. These forms must be updated in the first 10 days of each calendar quarter as long as lobbying activity continues. Breaking the law is a minor offense punishable by a fine of up to \$5,000 or a prison sentence of up to 12 months, and a three-year ban for lobbying. Although several lobbying laws governing special situations have been enacted - such as the lobbying of agents of foreign governments, employees of holding companies and companies affected by various federal shipping laws - federal lobbying law remains the only comprehensive law governing the practice of lobbying. Critics of the 1946 Act point out that its effectiveness is limited, as it does not apply to a large portion of the population that actually runs the government. In fact, in 1991, the General Accounting Office found that nearly 10,000 of the 13,500 people and organizations listed in a popular lobbyist manual were not registered under the 1946 Act. In 1995, Congress passed a law designed to close loopholes in the 1946 Law by increasing the responsibilities of lobbyists: the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (Fab. Under the new law, people who receive at least \$5,000 in a six-month period from one client are required to register with the House clerk and senate secretary, and list the chambers of Congress and federal agencies they have contacted, the issues they have dealt with, And how much money was put into the effort. Reporting requirements also apply to organizations whose employees work to lobby on their behalf and spend at least \$20,000 in a six-month period for that effort. Should lobbyists be strictly regulated? Since the 1940s of the debate in the United States about the proper role of lobbyists in a democratic society. Lobbyists say they offer valuable service to lawmakers and government officials, provide information and raise questions about pending legislation or executive action. Critics argue that many lobbyists have nothing more than influenced peddlers seeking political and legal favors for their clients. The perception that lobbyists and interest groups they represent have corrupted the political process has led to state and federal legislation governing lobbyists. Neverthor though, a fundamental conflict remains over the extent to which the government is allowed to regulate And lobbying activities. Opponents of lobbying restrictions argue that the First Amendment guarantees citizens' right to petition the government to amend complaints. Imposing restrictions on lobbyists violates that right. On the other side, critics of lobbyists argue that regulations are needed to preserve the democratic process and ensure the legitimacy of the government. Many people have become cynical about politicians and government, seizing that only lobbyists have access to the corridors of power. Lobbyists believe their activities are protected by the First Amendment. Although the U.S. Supreme Court has never stated that there is a constitutional right to petition the government, lobbying advocates point out that several of the country's supreme courts have recognized a fundamental right to do so. Therefore, all regulations on lobbying must have the least restrictive means to advance the compelling interest of the state. Lobbyists argue that regulations requiring them to name specific contacts made with the legislative staff or Congress have a chilling effect and weaken relationships that have been built up over many years. Staff members are often under time pressure to find legislative information, and depend on lobbyists to help them meet those requirements. Exposing ties with lobbyists forces staff to refrain from preparing legitimate requests, fearing that exposure would create political embarrassment. Lobbyists claim they have accepted an unflattering and absurd stereotype as influencers. With more than 14,000 lobbyists in Washington, D.C., representing every possible interest group, including environmental and consumer organizations, it's clear there's a demand for lobbying. The size and complexity of the federal government has largely driven the need for lobbyists to help define positions on public policy issues. Moreover, on all issues of widespread concern, lobbyists are on both sides, producing one more set of checks and balances that undermines the simplistic picture of corruption and kindness. Lobbyists and their supporters argue that intrusive regulations on lobbying can undermine the democratic process. Laws seeking to identify donors to lobbying groups may have a chilling effect on the exercise of citizens' rights. If published, donating to an unpopular lobby could discourage similar donations from others. Because many unpopular lobbying is small and underfunded, discouraging even some donors may have a significant impact on support for a wide range of perspectives. Advocates of stringent regulation of lobbyists dispute these arguments. They argue that regulation is needed to prevent special interests from controlling the political process, ensuring religious behavior by lawmakers and government officials, and boosting public trust in the government. Many scandals have been linked to lobbying in the Federal Levels, increased justification for such regulation. Lobbyists have a place in the legislative process, giving up many critics, but they should be prevented from using the money and favors to influence lawmakers and their staffs. Critics of lobbying point out that the courts generally supported reasonable regulation of lobbying activities. This kind of regulation does not prevent lobbyists from communicating openly and properly with the government about legislation. The regulation limits traditional practices such as providing tickets to legislators and flocks to sporting events, paying for meals and entertainment, and underwriting golf and skiing. These practices have contributed to the public perception that conditions and grants buy access to legislations and sometimes even voices. Critics of lobbying also support regulation that forces the public exposure of those who lobbyists represent. Registering lobbyists is a minimum restrictive means of providing the public interest, but it provides the public with information about which interest groups are involved in pending legislative matters. Critics argue that lobbyists will not be allowed to work on their influence anonymously. The public has a right to know which interest groups have designed legislation. Despite the reforms enacted in the Federal Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, 109 Stat. 691, 2 C U.S.A. § 1601 et seq., lobbying critics argue that further reform is needed. The law refers to the disclosure, registration and prohibition on gifts and meals, but it leaves major loopholes, the largest of which are the ability of lobbyists to contribute heavily to congressional members' campaign committees. Critics point to the irony of banning small gifts but allow senators and delegates to accept \$5,000 in donations for their campaign committees from lobbyist-dominated political action committees. Even more unfortunate, critics point out, is the change this situation has created in the dynamic between lobbyist and legislation: it is now the legislature that calls for a lobbyist and asks for a political donation. Critics argue that the intimate search for campaign funds has distorted the political system. The only way to prevent lobbyists and the special interests they represent from controlling the legislative process is to consolidate the public funding of congressional campaigns. Once campaign contributions are no longer a problem, critics conclude, lobbyists will lose their latest effective means of adversely affecting the legislation. Besides these federal regulations, states may separately enact their own regulations that apply to state lobbying. Most lobby restrictions involve reporting and registration provisions similar to those that exist at the federal level. Read more Brown, Stephen A. 1995. The constitutionality of lobby reform. William and Mary Bill Rights Journal 4. Deaquifer, Donald. E. 1981. How to lobby Congress: A guide to the citizen lobbyist. New Dud, right away. Doherty, Carol J., and the congressional quarterly staff. 1996. Quarterly Report of Congress 54 (January 20). Fuller, William F. 1993. Congressional lobbying disclosure laws: Much-needed reforms on the horizon. Stone Hall Legislative Journal 17. Government accounting firm. 1991. Federal Lobbying: Federal Regulation of the Lobbying Act of 1946 is ineffective. July, Washington. C. 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