

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE
Revised

House Bill 974 (Delegates Tavlora and Mandel)

Commerce & Government Matters

Ethics - Lobbyists - Disclosure of Business Transactions

This bill requires an individual regulated lobbyist to file a report disclosing any business transaction that the lobbyist has had with specified individuals or business entities involving the exchange of value of \$1,000 or more for a single transaction or \$5,000 or more for a series of transactions that occurred in the previous six months.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill would not significantly impact governmental operations or finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful.

Analysis

Current Law: A regulated lobbyist is required to file a report with the Ethics Commission concerning the lobbyist's lobbying activities twice a year. The information required by the bill is not included in a lobbyist's reporting requirements.

Background: The business of lobbying has experienced enormous growth recently and has had a tremendous impact on the legislative environment in Annapolis. Legislation was enacted during the 1999 session (Chapter 2) creating a Study Commission on Lobbyist Ethics. Chapter 2 required the commission to collect information on lobbying practices and standards of ethics for regulated lobbyists, to receive testimony, to develop a code of ethics for lobbyists, and to propose any appropriate statutory changes to the Maryland Public Ethics

Law as it relates to regulated lobbyists. The work of that commission is underway, and a report is expected by November 1, 2000.

State Fiscal Effect: The State Ethics Commission could handle any additional paperwork resulting from the bill using existing budgeted resources. Future enforcement costs resulting from the bill's requirements cannot be reliably estimated, but it is expected that the Ethics Commission could handle any such enforcement using existing budgeted resources.

Small Business Impact: The bill could require lobbyists to implement transaction tracking systems that they do not currently maintain. Depending on the nature and volume of a lobbyist's business, such a system could be costly.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: Similar bills were unsuccessfully introduced in 1988 and 1989 (SB 468).

Cross File: SB 754 (Senator Miller) - Economic and Environmental Affairs.

Information Source(s): State Ethics Commission, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 18, 2000

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