

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act Regarding Grassroots Lobbying

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 3 MRSA §312-A, sub-§7-B is enacted to read:

7-B. Grassroots lobbying. "Grassroots lobbying" means to communicate with members of the public to solicit them to communicate directly with any covered official for the purpose of influencing legislative action when that solicitation is made by:

- A. A broadcast, cable or satellite transmission;
- B. A communication delivered by e-mail, a website or any other digital format;
- C. A communication delivered by print media;
- D. A letter or other written communication delivered by mail or by comparable delivery service;
- E. Telephone; or
- F. A method of communication similar to those listed in paragraphs A to E.

"Grassroots lobbying" does not include a person communicating with that person's stockholders, employees, board members, officers or dues-paying members.

Sec. 2. 3 MRSA §312-A, sub-§11-A, as amended by PL 2007, c. 630, §8, is further amended to read:

11-A. Original source. "Original source" means any person who contributes or pays \$1,000 or more in any lobbying year directly or indirectly to any employer of a lobbyist for purposes of lobbying or grassroots lobbying or to any other person for purposes of grassroots lobbying, except that contributions of membership dues to nonprofit corporations formed under Title 13-B, under any equivalent state law or by legislative enactment are not considered contributions by an original source.

Sec. 3. 3 MRSA §312-A, sub-§14-A is enacted to read:

14-A. Solicit. "Solicit" means to entreat, to implore, to urge or to ask.

Sec. 4. 3 MRSA §317, sub-§1, ¶E-1 is enacted to read:

E-1. The specific dollar amount of expenditures for grassroots lobbying made or incurred during the month, with separate totals for expenditure categories as determined by the commission, the legislative actions that are the subject of the grassroots lobbying and a general description of the intended recipients;

Sec. 5. 3 MRSA §317, sub-§1, ¶J, as amended by PL 2007, c. 630, §14, is further amended to read:

J. A list of all of the lobbyist's original sources who have contributed or paid \$1,000 or more during the lobbying year directly or indirectly to the employer for purposes of lobbying and a statement of the dollar amounts contributed or paid by the original sources to the employer. If the original source is a corporation formed under Title 13 or 13-C or former Title 13-A, nonprofit corporation formed under Title 13-B or limited partnership under Title 31, the corporation, nonprofit organization or limited partnership, not the individual members or contributors, must be listed as the original source.

Sec. 6. 3 MRSA §317-A is enacted to read:

§ 317-A. Grassroots lobbying report

Any person not required to register under section 313 that spends more than \$2,000 on grassroots lobbying during a lobbying year shall file a report no later than 11:59 p.m. on the 15th day of the calendar month following the date on which that amount was exceeded. The person shall file monthly reports by 11:59 p.m. on the 15th calendar day of each month for the remainder of the lobbying year.

1. Report. A grassroots lobbying report filed by a person pursuant to this section must include:

A. The name of the person required to file the report;

B. The name of an individual serving as the contact for the person;

C. The business address and other contact information for the person;

D. A description of the business activity, mission, employer or occupation;

E. The specific amount of expenditures for grassroots lobbying made or incurred during the month that is the subject of the report, with separate totals for expenditure categories as determined by the commission, the legislative actions that are the subject of the grassroots lobbying and a general description of the intended recipients; and

F. A list of all of the person's original sources and a statement of the amounts contributed or paid by the original source. If the original source is a corporation formed under Title 13 or former Title 13-A, nonprofit corporation formed under Title 13-B or limited partnership under Title 31, the corporation, nonprofit organization or limited partnership, not the individual members or contributors, must be listed as the original source.

A person required to file monthly reports is subject to the same electronic filing requirements contained in section 317, subsection 2-A. Upon the termination of grassroots lobbying, the person shall file a notice of termination with the final monthly report.

SUMMARY

The bill defines "grassroots lobbying." It provides that a person who already files monthly reports as a lobbyist must disclose grassroots lobbying payments and expenditures. For a person who does not file reports as a lobbyist, the bill requires disclosure of grassroots lobbying expenditures once more than \$2,000 has been spent on grassroots lobbying.