

**Campaign Legal Center • Common Cause • Democracy 21  
League of Women Voters • Public Citizen • U.S. PIRG**

February 5, 2007

Dear Representative,

The House is expected to consider lobbying disclosure reform legislation shortly.

Our organizations strongly urge you to support as part of this legislation an essential provision to require lobbyists to disclose the contributions they collect or arrange for federal officeholders and candidates, leadership PACs and party committees.

The organizations include the Campaign Legal Center, Common Cause, Democracy 21, the League of Women Voters, Public Citizen and U.S. PIRG.

The requirement for lobbyists to disclose “bundled” contributions is a defining issue for lobbying disclosure legislation.

This disclosure requirement goes to the heart of the public’s right to know about the role played by lobbyists in Congress — individuals who are in the business of attempting to influence congressional decisions — and the contributions they provide to Members.

The ethics and lobbying reform legislation passed by the Senate last month included a requirement for lobbyists to disclose the amount of “bundled” contributions they provide for Members.

In the House, the same “bundling” disclosure language that is in the Senate-passed bill is contained in H.R. 633, legislation introduced by Representative Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Representative Marty Meehan (D-MA).

Our organizations strongly urge you to take all possible steps to ensure that the language contained in the Van Hollen-Meehan bill and also in the Senate-passed bill is enacted by the House as part of its lobbying reform legislation. There is no basis for the House to do less than the Senate on this essential lobbying disclosure issue.

Public disclosure of campaign contributions is a bedrock principle.

If it is appropriate to require lobbyists to disclose on their lobbying disclosure reports the contributions they make to each member of Congress — as the Senate passed-bill and the reform legislation introduced last year by then-Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) both require — it is certainly appropriate to require these lobbyists also to disclose the total amount of contributions they collect or arrange for each Member.

Absent such disclosure, a huge loophole will be created in the lobbying disclosure laws and critical information will be denied to citizens about the contributions being provided by lobbyists to members of Congress and others.

The widespread practice by Washington lobbyists of collecting or arranging contributions for members of Congress and other recipients generally results in far more money being provided by a lobbyist to a Member this way than the money directly given by such lobbyist.

From the public's point of view, all of these funds represent money provided by the lobbyist to the recipient and should be disclosed. There is no credible argument for failing to provide citizens with information on the total amount of contributions a lobbyist "bundles" for a Member.

A *Washington Post* editorial (January 23, 2007) noted the following about the "bundling" disclosure language contained in both the Van Hollen-Meehan bill and the Senate-passed bill:

For the first time, lobbyists would be required to list the fundraisers that they or their clients hosted and the amounts that were raised. They would have to provide a good-faith estimate of the total contributions they "collected or arranged" for individual candidates or political committees. In other words, they would have to provide the kind of information that is well known to those on the inside of the process but is obscured from outsiders.

According to a *New York Times* editorial (February 1, 2007), "Full disclosure of bundling is the sine qua non of lobbying reform."

Information about the funds provided by lobbyists to Members — including the total amount they collect or arrange for a Member — directly relates to activities being conducted by lobbyists in Congress. Disclosure of this information is essential for the public to understand the role being played by lobbyists in Congress.

We strongly urge you to support the language contained in the Senate-passed bill and the Van Hollen-Meehan bill to require lobbyists to disclose the total amount of contributions they "bundle" for a member of Congress or for other recipients, and to oppose any efforts to undermine or weaken this proposal.

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