



The League of Women Voters

OF PORTLAND OREGON

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Portland City Council

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Registration and Reporting Requirement for Lobbyists and City Officials

I am Norman Turrill, speaking on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Portland. I am a state League board member and a member of the League's Action Committee, where I hold the campaign finance portfolio. The League is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization, which encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government.

League positions state that the League "believes that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens at all levels of government. The League further believes that governmental bodies must protect the citizen's right to know...." Based on these positions, the League has long supported lobbyist registration and disclosure as an essential part of open government. Therefore, we strongly endorse the ordinance before you today.

We particularly like the requirement for the Auditor to review this complex ordinance by November since we have a few concerns:

- We support the idea of including all lobbyists, both volunteer and professional, in this system. The concern is, as a group our volunteer lobbyist expense reports will likely be zero and our lobby employer reports will show minimal expenses. With that in mind, you may want to consider instituting in the future a dollar threshold on the reporting requirements.
- We think the reports for lobbyist employers required by 2.12.060 A. should be required more often than annually. Quarterly reports would be better because employers can often expend much more than their lobbyists. These employer reports also should not exclude lobbyist living and travel expenses that are reimbursed.
- 2.12.070 B. should state clearly that it includes a city official asking for a campaign contribution either for his or her own campaign or a ballot measure campaign.
- 2.12.130 seems to require a civil suit by the City Attorney and considerable staff time to enforce any violation, even a relatively minor violation such as a late filing. We recommend that you consider allowing the Auditor's office to levy small fines for commonly occurring minor and listed violations, but require the Auditor to request an action by the City Attorney for larger penalties.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our ideas on this important legislation.

"To promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government."