



Serving the counties of District 2: Fannin, Delta, Hunt, Hopkins, Rains, Rockwall, Kaufman, Van Zandt, and part of Dallas County

Taxpayer Funded Lobbying

Let's keep your tax dollars from funding support for causes you don't agree with

Governmental entities and non-profit organizations currently funded with public taxpayer dollars are using those dollars to hire lobbyists to advocate against Texas Legislature bills intended to protect taxpayers. That is right, your tax dollars are being used to lobby against reductions in your property taxes, reforms in public education, restrictions on local government regulation, and other bills intended to protect Texas citizens.

Chuck DeVore of TPPF said "These lobbyists, employed with taxpayer money, typically use their influence with state lawmakers to advocate for greater spending, more taxing authority, and greater regulatory power, leaving 28 million individual Texans at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to getting their representatives' attention."

Governmental entities are using taxpayer money to influence legislation to their advantage by hiring lobbyists and lobby firms to peddle their opinions about bills and influence legislators. Taxpayers should not have to foot the bill for lobbying that advocates against their interest, such as cities lobbying against bills that could lead to lower taxes. Taxpayers should not have to pay for influencing legislators about a cause they don't support.

It's unethical. Therefore I have filed Senate Bill 82 which would prevent an agency, organization or government subdivision funded by tax dollars from hiring a lobbyist or engaging in lobbying activity.

It would not, however, prevent individuals or locally elected officials from coming to Austin to share their views on legislation. That local perspective is valuable when making public policy. However, the value is lost on me when I know that your tax dollars are being used in an attempt to convince me to side with a government entity over the taxpayer. I and all legislators are elected to protect taxpayers and to be fiscally responsible.

Last session, I filed similar legislation. Unfortunately, SB 1716 died in committee alongside many other pro-liberty bills. Former Senator Konni Burton filed SB 241, a bill that also would have ended taxpayer funded lobbying. Unfortunately, her bill shared the same fate. It is a testament to the effectiveness of the taxpayer-funded lobby effort that all bills to stop the abuse of taxpayers money have been stopped in their tracks by lobbyists funded with your tax dollars.

This session I am proud to serve on the State Affairs committee in the Senate. Our deliberations will cover a large variety of issues, including taxpayer funded lobbying.

At the 2018 Republican the State Convention in San Antonio, ending taxpayer-funded lobbying was identified as a priority legislative issue. In fact, it is Plank 217 in the Party Platform. I look forward to working shoulder-to-shoulder with the grassroots and all taxpayers to pass this much-needed reform. I sincerely believe ending taxpayer funded lobbying will eliminate many of the frivolous spending bills and allow the legislature to better protect individual liberties.





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Taxpayer Funded Lobbying *(continued)*

Don't be misled by false claims from those who want to protect the lobby. Eliminating taxpayer funded lobbying will in no way end the ability of local government officials to influence the legislature. State lawmakers are very sensitive to local concerns and always welcome discussions with local officials.

Therefore we must:

- Prohibit political subdivisions from spending taxpayer funds to hire outside lobbyists
- Prohibit political subdivisions from hiring someone to lobby the legislature
- Prohibit any taxpayer funds going to public agency associations that lobby the legislature.

Feel free to track SB 82 on Texas Legislature Online. I'll do my best to ensure this bill gets a hearing in committee. Please contact my Capitol office if you're interested in testifying for SB 82 in committee. Together we can accomplish great things for Texas.

