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S.54

Introduced by Senators Sirotkin, Collamore, and Branagan

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Legislature; lobbyists; identification

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to encourage lobbyists to wear identification and to require a report on compliance.

An act relating to lobbyist identification

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS

The General Assembly finds that:

(1) Lobbyists can fulfill an important part in the legislative process by ensuring that the perspectives of organizations, interest groups, and stakeholders are heard.

(2) However, as the number of lobbyists who work in the State House has increased, it has become more difficult for Representatives and Senators, staff, press, and members of the public to know who is a lobbyist and whom a lobbyist may be representing.

1 (3) As a result, some members of the public may have the perception
2 that there is a lack of transparency as to who is working as a lobbyist, and for
3 whom.

4 (4) Encouraging every lobbyist to wear identification that clearly
5 indicates his or her name and the name of the lobbyist's client or firm will
6 improve transparency and promote public trust in the legislative process.

7 Sec. 2. LOBBYIST IDENTIFICATION

8 (a) When the General Assembly is in session, all lobbyists as defined in
9 2 V.S.A. § 261 are encouraged to wear a name tag or another form of
10 identification that is clearly visible and that:

11 (1) states:

12 (A) the lobbyist's name; and

13 (B) the lobbyist's client or employer, or in cases where the lobbyist
14 represents more than one client or employer, the name of the lobbyist's firm, if
15 any; and

16 (2) is substantially similar in size, format, and information displayed to a
17 sample name tag or identification that shall be developed by the Sergeant at
18 Arms.

19 (b) The Sergeant at Arms and the Office of Legislative Council shall report
20 to the General Assembly on or before January 15, 2019, on the rate of
21 compliance by lobbyists with this section, the advantages and disadvantages of

1 requiring that lobbyists wear name tags or identification, and a
2 recommendation as to whether a voluntary program is sufficient, or whether
3 further legislative action to improve participation should be considered. In
4 preparing their report, the Sergeant at Arms and the Office of Legislative
5 Council shall solicit input from lobbyists, Representatives and Senators, staff
6 of the General Assembly, and other stakeholders.

7 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

8 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2017.