

1 S.106

2 Introduced by Senators Sirotkin and Brock

3 Referred to Committee on:

4 Date:

5 Subject: Legislature; pilot project to livestream legislative proceedings;  
6 lobbyist identification; lobbyist compliance

7 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to create a pilot  
8 project to livestream committee proceedings and floor proceedings of the  
9 General Assembly, to encourage lobbyists to wear identification, and to require  
10 a report on lobbyist compliance.

11 An act relating to the livestream of legislative proceedings of the General  
12 Assembly and lobbying regulations

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

14 Sec. 1. PILOT PROJECT TO LIVESTREAM LEGISLATIVE

15 PROCEEDINGS

16 The Office of Legislative Information Technology shall facilitate and  
17 coordinate a pilot project with a for-profit or nonprofit entity to assist and  
18 assess the effectiveness and cost of audio or audio and video livestreaming the  
19 legislative proceedings of the General Assembly. The pilot project shall  
20 include the livestream, by audio or audio and video means, of all public

1 proceedings of standing committees of both chambers and on the floors of the  
2 House of Representatives and the Senate during the 2022 legislative session.

3 Sec. 2. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS; LOBBYING REGULATIONS

4 The General Assembly finds that:

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

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

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

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

18 Sec. 3. LOBBYIST IDENTIFICATION

19 (a) When the General Assembly is in session, a lobbyist as defined in  
20 2 V.S.A. § 261 is encouraged to wear a name tag or another form of  
21 identification that is clearly visible and that:

1           (1) states:

2                   (A) the lobbyist's name; and

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

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

9           (b) The Sergeant at Arms and the Office of Legislative Counsel shall report  
10 to the General Assembly on or before January 15, 2023 on the rate of  
11 compliance by lobbyists with this section, the advantages and disadvantages of  
12 requiring that lobbyists wear name tags or identification, and a  
13 recommendation as to whether a voluntary program is sufficient or whether  
14 further legislative action to improve participation should be considered. In  
15 preparing their report, the Sergeant at Arms and the Office of Legislative  
16 Counsel shall solicit input from lobbyists, Representatives and Senators, staff  
17 of the General Assembly, and other stakeholders.

18       Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

19           This act shall take effect on July 1, 2021.