

1 H.686

2 Introduced by Representatives Sibilila of Dover, Donahue of Northfield,
3 Headrick of Burlington, Logan of Burlington, Priestley of
4 Bradford, and Tomlinson of Winooski

5 Referred to Committee on

6 Date:

7 Subject: Legislature; registration of lobbyists; identification in and report of
8 certain lobbying advertisements

9 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require the
10 identification of certain lobbying advertisements during legislative sessions.

11 An act relating to expanding identification of certain lobbying
12 advertisements

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

14 ~~Sec. 1. 2 V.S.A. § 264c is amended to read:~~

15 § 264c. IDENTIFICATION IN AND REPORT OF CERTAIN LOBBYING
16 ADVERTISEMENTS

17 (a) Identification.

18 (1) An advertisement that is intended, designed, or calculated to
19 influence legislative action or to solicit others to influence legislative action
20 ~~and that is made at any time prior to final adjournment of a biennial or~~

1 ~~adjourned legislative session shall contain the name of any lobbyist, lobbying~~
2 ~~firm, or lobbyist employer that made an expenditure for the advertisement and~~
3 ~~language that the advertisement was paid for, or paid in part, by the lobbyist,~~
4 ~~lobbying firm, or lobbyist employer; provided, however:~~

5 * * *

6 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

7 ~~This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.~~

Sec. 1. 2 V.S.A. § 261 is amended to read:

§ 261. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

* * *

(9) "Lobby" or "lobbying" means:

*(A) to communicate orally or in writing with any legislator or
administrative official for the purpose of influencing legislative or
administrative action;*

*(B) solicitation of others to influence legislative or administrative
action;*

*(C) an attempt to obtain the goodwill of a legislator or
administrative official by communications or activities with that legislator or
administrative official intended ultimately to influence legislative or
administrative action, or*

~~(D) activities sponsored by an employer or lobbyist on behalf of or for the benefit of the members of an interest group, if a principal purpose of the activity is to enable such members to communicate orally with one or more legislators or administrative officials for the purpose of influencing legislative or administrative action or to obtain their goodwill.~~

~~***~~

~~Sec. 2. 2 V.S.A. § 264c is amended to read:~~

~~§ 264c. IDENTIFICATION IN AND REPORT OF CERTAIN LOBBYING
ADVERTISEMENTS~~

~~(a) Identification.~~

~~(1) An advertisement that is intended, designed, or calculated to influence legislative action or to solicit others to influence legislative action and that is made at any time prior to final adjournment of a biennial or adjourned legislative session shall contain the name of any lobbyist, lobbying firm, or lobbyist employer that made an expenditure for the advertisement and language that the advertisement was paid for, or paid in part, by the lobbyist, lobbying firm, or lobbyist employer; provided, however:~~

~~***~~

~~(c) Definitions. As used in this section:~~

~~(1) "Advertisement" means a notice or communication that:~~

~~(A) appears in any of the following public media: including radio, television, newspapers ~~or~~ and other periodicals, or internet websites; or~~

~~(B) is widely disseminated to the public, including mass mailings, robotic phone calls, and paid internet communications.~~

~~(2) "Advertising campaign" means advertisements substantially similar in nature, regardless of the media in which they are placed.~~

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

~~This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.~~

Sec. 1. 2 V.S.A. § 261 is amended to read:

§ 261. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

** * **

(9) "Lobby" or "lobbying" means:

(A) to communicate orally or in writing with any legislator or administrative official for the purpose of influencing legislative or administrative action;

(B) solicitation of others to influence legislative or administrative action;

(C) an attempt to obtain the goodwill of a legislator or administrative official by communications or activities with that legislator or

administrative official intended ultimately to influence legislative or administrative action; or

(D) activities sponsored by an employer or lobbyist on behalf of or for the benefit of the members of an interest group, if a principal purpose of the activity is to enable such members to communicate orally with one or more legislators or administrative officials for the purpose of influencing legislative or administrative action or to obtain their goodwill.

* * *

Sec. 2. 2 V.S.A. § 264c is amended to read:

*§ 264c. IDENTIFICATION IN AND REPORT OF CERTAIN LOBBYING
ADVERTISEMENTS*

(a) Identification.

(1) An advertisement that is intended, designed, or calculated to influence legislative action or to solicit others to influence legislative action and that is made at any time prior to final adjournment of a biennial or adjourned legislative session shall contain the name of any lobbyist, lobbying firm, or lobbyist employer that made an expenditure for the advertisement and language that the advertisement was paid for, or paid in part, by the lobbyist, lobbying firm, or lobbyist employer; provided, however:

* * *

(b) Report.

(1) In addition to any other reports required to be filed under this chapter, a lobbyist, lobbying firm, or lobbyist employer shall file an advertisement report with the Secretary of State if he, she, or it makes an expenditure or expenditures:

(A) for any advertisement that is described in subsection (a) of this section and that has a cost totaling \$1,000.00 or more; or

(B) for any advertising campaign that contains advertisements described in subsection (a) of this section and that has a cost totaling \$1,000.00 or more.

(2) The report shall be made for each advertisement or advertising campaign described in subdivision (1) of this subsection and shall identify:

(A) the lobbyist, lobbying firm, or lobbyist employer that made the expenditure;

(B) the amount and date of the expenditure and to whom it was paid;
and

(C) a brief description of the advertisement or advertising campaign, including:

(i) any enacted or introduced bill or any issue featured in the advertisement or advertising campaign;

(ii) any specific person featured in the advertisement or advertising campaign; and

(iii) whether the intent or content in the advertisement or advertising campaign offers an opinion of support, opposition, or neutrality on a bill, issue, or person.

(3) Notwithstanding subdivision (1) of this subsection, an advertisement report need not be filed if the lobbyist, lobbying firm, or lobbyist employer has already filed the necessary reports and disclosures required under 17 V.S.A. chapter 61, subchapter 4, for the same advertisement or advertisement campaign.

(c) *Definitions. As used in this section:*

(1) *“Advertisement” means a notice that appears in any of the following public media: radio, television, newspapers or other periodicals, or internet websites.*

(2) *“Advertising campaign” means advertisements substantially similar in nature, regardless of the media in which they are placed.*

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.