



**State of Vermont
Office of the Secretary of State**

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**Sarah Copeland Hanzas, Secretary of State
S. Lauren Hibbert, Deputy Secretary**

**Elections Division
Seán Sheehan, Director**

February 12, 2026

**To: Hon. Matthew Birong, Chair
House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs**

**From: S. Lauren Hibbert, Deputy Secretary of State
Sean Sheehan, Director, Elections and Campaign Finance**

Re: H.686

Dear Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify about the proposed amendment to H.686. We support the greater transparency this bill provides. We agree that lobbying advertisements should be clearly identified at any time of year, even after the legislature has adjourned.

The Secretary of State supports the decision to limit the change in approach to lobbying disclosure. This bill does not amend 2 V.S.A. § 266 and its distinction between the treatment of lobbyist gifts during the legislative session vs. outside of session. Lobbyists will still be prohibited during the legislative session from being solicited for contributions or from making or promising contributions to legislators and entities identified in 2 V.S.A. § 266. Lobbyists will still be allowed to make campaign contributions outside of the legislative session. Those contributions will continue to be reported by lobbyists in the Lobbying Information System. They will also continue to be reported by the recipient in accordance with law in the Campaign Finance System. We support this approach and the transparency it provides.