

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 416

By Senator Rucker

[Introduced January 15, 2026; referred
to the Committee on Government Organization]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §6B-3-10 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
2 to prohibiting political subdivisions from using state funds to pay for lobbying; exempting
3 law enforcement from the prohibition; and creating a cause of action to enforce the
4 prohibition.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE**3.****LOBBYISTS.**

**§6B-3-10. Provisions may be adopted by local governments; disclosures by state agencies,
municipalities, counties, and school districts relating to lobbying activities.**

1 (a) An incorporated municipality may enact lobbyist regulation provisions substantially
2 similar to the provisions of this article which may be modified to the extent necessary to make the
3 provisions relevant to that jurisdiction and which may be further modified to the extent deemed
4 necessary and appropriate by and for that jurisdiction.

5 (b) Beginning on July 1, 2022, every state agency, municipality, county, and school district
6 in the state that contracts for lobbying services shall disclose, and when applicable provide copies
7 of, the following information to the West Virginia Ethics Commission:

8 (1) Contract details, including, but not limited to, the identities of the parties to the contract,
9 the date on which the contract becomes or became effective, any applicable extension dates,
10 payment and reimbursement terms, and duration;

11 (2) A copy of the contract for lobbying services;

12 (3) All costs to be paid or reimbursed, or already paid or reimbursed, for lobbying services
13 associated with or related to the contract for lobbying services, including itemized expenses such
14 as dinners, meals, or events; and

15 (4) The identities of any individuals or entities engaging in activities pursuant to the
16 contract for lobbying services that may require the individual or entity to register as a lobbyist.

17 (c) On July 1, 2023, and on July 1 of each year thereafter, every state agency, municipality,
18 county, and school district in the state that has contracted for lobbying services in the preceding

year shall report to the Ethics Commission all information required by the provisions of subsection (b) of this section.

(d) Starting July 1, 2026, no political subdivision may use any public funds to pay for lobbying services, including, but not limited to salary of a lobbyist and reimbursement of costs.

(e) The restrictions contained in subsection (d) do not apply to elected sheriffs or individual law enforcement officers.

(f) Subsection (d) does not prohibit:

(1) An officer or employee of a political subdivision from providing information for a member of the legislature or appearing before a legislative committee;

(2) An elected official of a political subdivision from advocating for or against or otherwise influencing or attempting to influence the outcome of legislation pending before the legislature while acting as an officer of the political subdivision;

(3) An employee of a political subdivision from advocating for or against or otherwise influencing or attempting to influence the outcome of legislation pending before the legislature if those actions would not require the person to register as a lobbyist under §6B-3-2 of this code;

(4) A political subdivision from reimbursing an officer or full-time employee of the political subdivision for direct travel expenses incurred by the officer or employee for engaging in an activity described by subdivision (f)(1), (f)(2), or (f)(3); or

(5) A full-time employee of a nonprofit association or organization that primarily represents political subdivisions of this state from:

(A) Providing legislative services related to bill tracking, bill analysis, and legislative alerts;

(B) Communicating directly with a member of the legislature to provide information if the communication would not require a person to register as a lobbyist under §6B-3-2 of this code; or

(C) Testifying for or against legislation before the legislature.

(g) If a political subdivision engages in an activity prohibited by subsection (d), a taxpayer or resident of the political subdivision may seek appropriate injunctive relief to prevent further

- 45 activity prohibited by subsection (d) and further payment of public funds related to that activity.
- 46 (h) A taxpayer or resident who prevails in any action taken under subsection (g) is entitled
- 47 to recover from the political subdivision the taxpayer's or resident's reasonable attorney's fees and
- 48 costs incurred in bringing the action.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to ban taxpayer funded lobbying.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.