

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

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G.A.B. Releases Lobbying Report for 2009

MADISON, WI – The Wisconsin Education Association spent \$1.5 million in 2009 lobbying state lawmakers, nearly twice as much as the next-largest spender, according to a report from the Government Accountability Board.

Overall, lobbying organizations reported spending \$36.2 million in 2009, a 5.2 percent increase from the first half of the previous legislative session.

The 2009 report analyzes the activities of 746 lobbying principals and 750 registered lobbyists.

“Not only is Wisconsin’s lobbying law strong, but information about lobbying activities is easy to use online,” said Kevin J. Kennedy, director and general counsel of the G.A.B. “The law requires disclosure and prohibits gifts to lawmakers. The Board’s Eye on Lobbying online database allows the public to keep track of lobbying activities at the Capitol without leaving home.”

The most lobbied bill in 2009 was the AB 138, regarding appointment of the secretary of the Natural Resources Board. Organizations reported spending 2,923 hours attempting to influence legislators on that bill.

The Top 10 Lobbying Organizations in 2009 were:

1. Wisconsin Education Association, 7,239 hours, \$1,511,272
2. Wisconsin Insurance Alliance, 1,427 hours, \$777,430
3. Forest County Potawatomi Community, 1,492 hours, \$756,512
4. Altria Client Services Inc., 1,321 hours, \$755,733
5. Wisconsin Hospital Association, 5,126, \$605,033
6. Wisconsin Petroleum Marketers & Convenience Store Association, 1,379, \$560,544
7. Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce, 4,967 hours, \$508,023
8. RAI Services Company (formerly Reynolds American Inc.), 186 hours, \$466,253
9. Wisconsin Independent Businesses Inc., 7,939 hours, \$458,414
10. Wisconsin Energy Corporation, 1,547 hours, \$387,222.

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The full report is available online at: <http://ethics.state.wi.us>. Click on “Eye on Lobbying” to view the reports and to search the lobbying database.

By law, any organization that lobbies state government must file reports with the Government Accountability Board, which posts them on online in a searchable database. Organizations report their lobbying activities two ways: real-time reports within 15 days of when they begin to lobby on a specific bill or issue, and six-month reports detailing the hours and dollars spent lobbying. In Wisconsin, lobbyists are forbidden by law to give meals, entertainment or other gifts to state lawmakers, and campaign donations are limited to specific windows of time outside the normal legislative session.

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The Government Accountability Board is responsible for administration and enforcement of campaign finance, elections, ethics and lobbying laws in Wisconsin. The board is made up of six non-partisan, former judges and is supported by an agency of non-partisan staff members. Additional information about the mission of the Government Accountability Board is available by telephone at **608-266-8005**, by electronic mail at **gab@wi.gov**, or through the Internet at **<http://gab.wi.gov>**.