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SENATE BILL NO. 50

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled November 24, 2025

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 2.2-419, 2.2-420, 2.2-425, 2.2-426, and 2.2-432 of the Code of Virginia, relating to lobbying; registration; local governments; penalty.

Patron—Rouse

Referred to Committee on General Laws and Technology

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 2.2-419, 2.2-420, 2.2-425, 2.2-426, and 2.2-432 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 2.2-419. Definitions.

As used in this article, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Anything of value" means:

1. A pecuniary item, including money, or a bank bill or note;
 2. A promissory note, bill of exchange, order, draft, warrant, check, or bond given for the payment of money;
 3. A contract, agreement, promise, or other obligation for an advance, conveyance, forgiveness of indebtedness, deposit, distribution, loan, payment, gift, pledge, or transfer of money;
 4. A stock, bond, note, or other investment interest in an entity;
 5. A receipt given for the payment of money or other property;
 6. A right in action;
 7. A gift, tangible good, chattel, or an interest in a gift, tangible good, or chattel;
 8. A loan or forgiveness of indebtedness;
 9. A work of art, antique, or collectible;
 10. An automobile or other means of personal transportation;
 11. Real property or an interest in real property, including title to realty, a fee simple or partial interest, present or future, contingent or vested within realty, a leasehold interest, or other beneficial interest in realty;
 12. An honorarium or compensation for services;
 13. A rebate or discount in the price of anything of value unless the rebate or discount is made in the ordinary course of business to a member of the public without regard to that person's status as an executive or legislative, or local government official, or the sale or trade of something for reasonable compensation that would ordinarily not be available to a member of the public;
 14. A promise or offer of employment; or
 15. Any other thing of value that is pecuniary or compensatory in value to a person.
- "Anything of value" does not mean a campaign contribution properly received and reported pursuant to Chapter 9.3 (§ 24.2-945 et seq.) of Title 24.2.

"Compensation" means:

1. An advance, conveyance, forgiveness of indebtedness, deposit, distribution, loan, payment, gift, pledge, or transfer of money or anything of value; or
2. A contract, agreement, promise, or other obligation for an advance, conveyance, forgiveness of indebtedness, deposit, distribution, loan, payment, gift, pledge, or transfer of money or anything of value, for services rendered or to be rendered.

"Compensation" does not mean reimbursement of expenses if the reimbursement does not exceed the amount actually expended for the expenses and it is substantiated by an itemization of expenses.

"Council" means the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council established in § 30-355.

"Executive action" means the proposal, drafting, development, consideration, amendment, adoption, approval, promulgation, issuance, modification, rejection, or postponement by an executive agency or official of legislation or executive orders issued by the Governor. "Executive action" includes procurement transactions.

"Executive agency" means an agency, board, commission, or other body in the executive branch of state government. "Executive agency" includes the State Corporation Commission, the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission, and the Virginia Lottery.

"Executive official" means:

1. The Governor;
2. The Lieutenant Governor;
3. The Attorney General;

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4. Any officer or employee of the office of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or Attorney General other than a clerical or secretarial employee;

5. The Governor's Secretaries, the Deputy Secretaries, and the chief executive officer of each executive agency; or

6. Members of supervisory and policy boards, commissions, and councils, as defined in § 2.2-2100, however selected.

"Expenditure" means:

1. A purchase, payment, distribution, loan, forgiveness of a loan or payment of a loan by a third party, advance, deposit, transfer of funds, a promise to make a payment, or a gift of money or anything of value for any purpose;

2. A payment to a lobbyist for salary, fee, reimbursement for expenses, or other purpose by a person employing, retaining, or contracting for the services of the lobbyist separately or jointly with other persons;

3. A payment in support of or assistance to a lobbyist or the lobbyist's activities, including the direct payment of expenses incurred at the request or suggestion of the lobbyist;

4. A payment that directly benefits an executive ~~or~~, legislative, *or local government* official or a member of the official's immediate family;

5. A payment, including compensation, payment, or reimbursement for the services, time, or expenses of an employee for or in connection with direct communication with an executive ~~or~~, legislative, *or local government* official;

6. A payment for or in connection with soliciting or urging other persons to enter into direct communication with an executive ~~or~~, legislative, *or local government* official; or

7. A payment or reimbursement for categories of expenditures required to be reported pursuant to this chapter.

"Expenditure" does not mean a campaign contribution properly received and reported pursuant to Chapter 9.3 (§ 24.2-945 et seq.) of Title 24.2.

"Fair market value" means the price that a good or service would bring between a willing seller and a willing buyer in the open market after negotiations. If the fair market value cannot be determined, the actual price paid for the good or service shall be given consideration.

"Gift" means anything of value, including any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, or other item having monetary value, and includes services as well as gifts of transportation, local travel, lodgings, and meals, whether provided in-kind or by purchase of a ticket, payment in advance, or reimbursement after the expense has been incurred.

"Gift" does not mean:

1. Printed informational or promotional material;

2. A gift that is not used and, no later than 60 days after receipt, is returned to the donor or delivered to a charitable organization and is not claimed as a charitable contribution for federal income tax purposes;

3. A devise or inheritance;

4. A gift of a value of less than \$20;

5. Any offer of a ticket, coupon, or other admission or pass unless the ticket, coupon, admission, or pass is used;

6. Any food or beverages provided to an individual at an event at which the individual is performing official duties related to his public service;

7. Any food and beverages received at or registration or attendance fees waived for any event at which the individual is a featured speaker, presenter, or lecturer;

8. An unsolicited award of appreciation or recognition in the form of a plaque, trophy, wall memento, or similar item that is given in recognition of public, civic, charitable, or professional service;

9. Any gift to an individual's spouse, child, ~~uncle, aunt, niece, nephew~~ *parent's sibling, sibling's child*, or first cousin; a person to whom the donee is engaged to be married; the donee's or his spouse's parent, grandparent, grandchild, ~~brother, sister~~ *sibling*, step-parent, step-grandparent, step-grandchild; ~~step-brother, or step-sister~~ *step-sibling*; or the donee's ~~brother's or sister's~~ *sibling's* spouse or the *spouse of the donee's son-in-law or daughter-in-law child*;

10. Travel provided to facilitate attendance by a legislator at a regular or special session of the General Assembly, a meeting of a legislative committee or commission, or a national conference where attendance is approved by the House Committee on Rules or its ~~Chairman~~ *Chair* or the Senate Committee on Rules or its ~~Chairman~~ *Chair*;

11. Travel related to an official meeting of, or any meal provided for attendance at such meeting by, the Commonwealth, its political subdivisions, or any board, commission, authority, or other entity, or any charitable organization established pursuant to § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code affiliated with such entity, to which such person has been appointed or elected or is a member by virtue of his office or employment; or

12. Attendance at a reception or similar function where food, such as hors d'oeuvres, and beverages that can be conveniently consumed by a person while standing or walking are offered.

"Immediate family" means (i) the spouse and (ii) any other person who resides in the same household as the executive ~~or~~, legislative, *or local government* official and who is a dependent of the official.

"Legislative action" means:

1. Preparation, research, drafting, introduction, consideration, modification, amendment, approval, passage, enactment, tabling, postponement, defeat, or rejection of a bill, resolution, amendment, motion, report, nomination, appointment, or other matter by the General Assembly or a legislative official;

2. Action by the Governor in approving, vetoing, or recommending amendments for a bill passed by the General Assembly; or

3. Action by the General Assembly in overriding or sustaining a veto by the Governor, considering amendments recommended by the Governor, or considering, confirming, or rejecting an appointment of the Governor.

"Legislative official" means:

1. A member or member-elect of the General Assembly;

2. A member of a committee, subcommittee, commission, or other entity established by and responsible to the General Assembly or either house of the General Assembly; or

3. Persons employed by the General Assembly or an entity established by and responsible to the General Assembly.

"Lobbying" means:

1. Influencing or attempting to influence executive ~~or~~, legislative, *or local government* action through oral or written communication with an executive ~~or~~, legislative, *or local government* official; or

2. Solicitation of others to influence an executive ~~or~~, legislative, *or local government* official.

"Lobbying" does not mean:

1. Requests for appointments, information on the status of pending executive ~~and~~, legislative, *and local government* actions, or other ministerial contacts if there is no attempt to influence executive ~~or~~ legislative *such* actions;

2. Responses to published notices soliciting public comment submitted to the public official designated in the notice to receive the responses;

3. The solicitation of an association by its members to influence legislative ~~or~~ executive, *legislative, or local government* action; or

4. Communications between an association and its members and communications between a principal and its lobbyists.

"Lobbyist" means:

1. An individual who is employed and receives payments, or who contracts for economic consideration, including reimbursement for reasonable travel and living expenses, for the purpose of lobbying;

2. An individual who represents an organization, association, or other group for the purpose of lobbying; or

3. A local government employee who lobbies *to influence executive or legislative action or officials*.

"Lobbyist's principal" or "principal" means the entity on whose behalf the lobbyist influences or attempts to influence executive ~~or~~, legislative, *or local government* action. An organization whose employees conduct lobbying activities on its behalf is both a principal and an employer of the lobbyists. In the case of a coalition or association that employs or retains others to conduct lobbying activities on behalf of its membership, the principal is the coalition or association and not its individual members.

"Local government" means:

1. Any county, city, town, or other local or regional political subdivision;

2. Any school division;

3. Any organization or entity that exercises governmental powers that is established pursuant to an interstate compact; or

4. Any organization composed of members representing entities listed in ~~subdivisions~~ *subdivision 1, 2, or 3 of this definition*.

"Local government action" means the adoption, enactment, modification, or repeal of an ordinance or resolution and includes actions related to local taxes, the budget of a locality, and land use proceedings.

"Local government employee" means a public employee of a local government.

"Local government official" means:

1. A councilmember, a member of a board of supervisors, or a member of a governing body of a local government;

2. A member of a supervisory or policy board, commission, council, or other entity established by and responsible to a local government; or

3. A person employed by a person or entity established by and responsible to a local government.

"Person" means an individual, proprietorship, firm, partnership, joint venture, joint stock company, syndicate, business trust, estate, company, corporation, association, club, committee, organization, or group of persons acting in concert.

"Procurement transaction" means all functions that pertain to obtaining all goods, services, or construction

on behalf of an executive agency, including description of requirements, selection and solicitation of sources, preparation and award of contract, and all phases of contract administration where the stated or expected value of the contract is \$5 million or more.

"Secretary" means the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

"Value" means the actual cost or fair market value of an item ~~or items~~, whichever is greater. If the fair market value cannot be determined, the actual amount paid for the item ~~or items~~ shall be given consideration.

"Widely attended event" means an event at which at least 25 persons have been invited to attend or there is a reasonable expectation that at least 25 persons will attend the event and the event is open to individuals ~~who~~ (i) ~~who~~ are members of a public, civic, charitable, or professional organization;; (ii) ~~who~~ are from a particular industry or profession;; or (iii) ~~who~~ represent persons interested in a particular issue.

§ 2.2-420. Exemptions.

The registration and reporting provisions of this article shall not apply to:

1. The Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, and their immediate staffs or the Governor's Secretaries and their immediate staffs, acting in an official capacity;

2. Members of the General Assembly and other legislative officials and legislative employees acting in an official capacity;

3. Local ~~elected~~ *government* officials acting in an official capacity;

4. Any employee of a state executive agency acting in an official capacity;

5. A duly elected or appointed official or employee of the United States acting in an official capacity;

6. An individual who limits lobbying solely to (i) formal testimony before a public meeting of an executive agency ~~or~~, legislative body, *or local government agency or governing body* and registers the appearance in the records of the agency or body and (ii) testimony and information compelled by action of an executive agency ~~or~~, legislative body, *or local government agency or governing body*;

7. A person who receives \$500 or less in compensation and reimbursements, excluding personal living and travel expenses that are not reimbursed from any other source, in a calendar year for his lobbying activities;

8. A person who receives no compensation or anything of value for lobbying, and does not expend more than \$500, excluding personal living and travel expenses that are not reimbursed from any other source, in lobbying in the calendar year; or

9. An employee of a business, other entity, or local government whose job duties do not regularly include lobbying.

§ 2.2-425. Registration information to be recorded in legislative docket; list of executive officials.

A. The Secretary of the Commonwealth shall maintain in a legislative docket the information filed under § 2.2-423 pertaining to lobbying involving legislative actions during any session of the General Assembly. The Secretary shall furnish current, complete lists thereof to the clerk of each house and to each member of the General Assembly once every two weeks during the session of the General Assembly beginning with the convening of the General Assembly.

B. The Secretary of the Commonwealth shall prepare a list of *the positions and names of* executive officials; ~~their positions and names~~, to be revised at least semi-annually and made available to lobbyists to assist them in complying with the provisions of this article.

C. *The Secretary of the Commonwealth shall prepare a list of the positions and names of local government officials to be revised at least semi-annually and made available to lobbyists to assist them in complying with the provisions of this article.*

§ 2.2-426. Lobbyist reporting; penalty.

A. Each lobbyist shall file with the Council a separate annual report of expenditures, including gifts, for each principal for whom he lobbies by July 1 for the preceding 12-month period complete through the last day of April.

B. Each principal who expends more than \$500 to employ or compensate multiple lobbyists shall be responsible for filing a consolidated lobbyist report pursuant to this section in any case in which the lobbyists are each exempt under the provisions of subdivision 7 or 8 of § 2.2-420 from the reporting requirements of this section.

C. The report shall be on a form prescribed by the Council and shall be accompanied by instructions provided by the Council. All reports shall be submitted electronically and in accordance with the standards approved by the Council pursuant to the provisions of § 30-356.

D. A person who knowingly and intentionally makes a false statement of a material fact on the disclosure statement is guilty of a Class 5 felony.

E. The name of a legislative ~~or~~, executive, *or local government* official, or a member of his immediate family, attending any reportable entertainment event shall not be required to be disclosed by the principal if ~~that legislative or executive~~ *such* official reimburses the principal for, or otherwise pays for, his attendance, or the attendance of a member of his immediate family, at the entertainment event. Reimbursement shall be calculated using the average value for each person attending the event.

F. Each lobbyist shall send to each legislative ~~and~~, executive, *and local government* official who is

required to be identified by name on Schedule A or B of the Lobbyist's Disclosure Form a copy of Schedule A or B or a summary of the information pertaining to that official. Copies or summaries shall be provided to the official by January 10 for the preceding 12-month period complete through December 31. In addition, each lobbyist shall send to each legislator and executive official who is required to file a report of gifts accepted or received during a regular session of the General Assembly pursuant to § 2.2-3114.2 or 30-110.1 a summary of all gifts made by such lobbyist to each legislator or executive official or a member of his immediate family during the period beginning on January 1 complete through adjournment sine die of the regular session of the General Assembly. Summaries shall be provided to the legislator or executive official no later than three weeks after adjournment sine die. For purposes of this section, "adjournment sine die" means adjournment on the last legislative day of the regular session and does not include the reconvened session.

§ 2.2-432. Contingent compensation prohibited.

It shall be unlawful for any individual to lobby for compensation that is dependent in any manner upon the outcome of any legislative or executive, or local government action.

2. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on May 1, 2027.

2. That the provisions of this act may result in a net increase in periods of imprisonment or commitment. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of Virginia, the estimated amount of the necessary appropriation cannot be determined for periods of imprisonment in state adult correctional facilities; therefore, Chapter 725 of the Acts of Assembly of 2025 requires the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission to assign a minimum fiscal impact of \$50,000. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of Virginia, the estimated amount of the necessary appropriation cannot be determined for periods of commitment to the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice.