

Government Accountability Board

State of Wisconsin

212 E. Washington Ave., Third Floor • Madison, WI 53703 • gab@wi.gov • (608) 266-8005 • Help Desk (608) 261-2028 • <http://gab.wi.gov>

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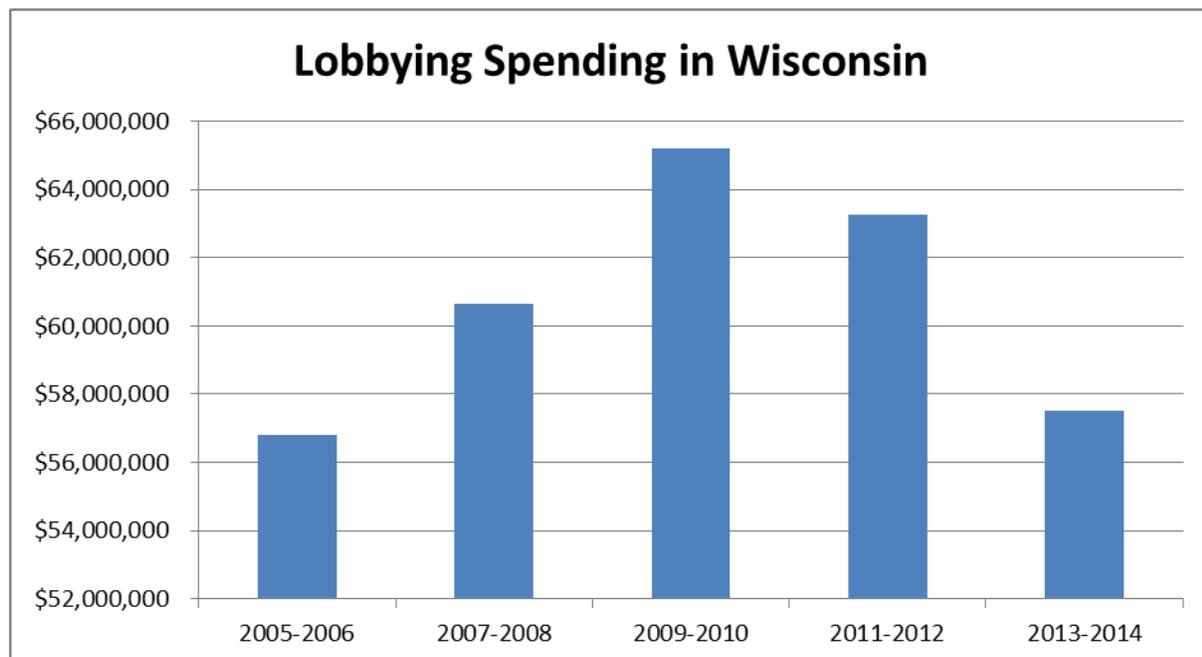
FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Reid Magney, 608-267-7887

G.A.B. Releases Lobbying Reports for 2013-2014

MADISON, WI – Lobbying of the Wisconsin Legislature continued to fall during the 2013-2014 legislative session, according to reports from the Government Accountability Board.

Overall, lobbying organizations reported spending \$57.5 million, a 9.1 percent decrease from the \$62.8 million spent in the 2011-2013 legislative session. The number of hours spent lobbying lawmakers also decreased by 12.8 percent, from 432,255 in 2011-2012 to 378,108 in 2013-2014.

“Lobbying activity in Wisconsin had steadily increased every session until 2011-2012, but it has now decreased for two consecutive sessions,” said Jonathan Becker, Ethics & Accountability Division administrator for the Board.



The 2013-2014 report analyzes the activities of 743 registered lobbying principals (organizations and companies that communicated with the legislature) and 685 licensed lobbyists (individuals paid to lobby on behalf of principals).

"Wisconsin has a strong lobbying law which requires extensive reporting so the public can easily learn who is trying to influence legislation and how much they're spending," said Kevin J.

Kennedy, director and general counsel of the Government Accountability Board. “In late 2012, the Board completely revamped its award-winning Eye on Lobbying website (<http://lobbying.wi.gov>) which allows the public to keep track of lobbying activities at the Capitol without leaving home.”

Users who want more frequent, customized updates can subscribe to FOCUS, a service that notifies subscribers about new bills, lobbying efforts and positions on bills based on keyword searches. The \$100 subscription fee covers an entire two-year legislative session. For more information about FOCUS, visit <http://lobbying.wi.gov/Focus/FocusHome/Index?session=2015REG>

The Top 10 Lobbying Organizations, as ranked by dollars spent, in the 2013-2014 Session were:

1. Wisconsin Property Taxpayers Inc., 9,745 hours, \$1,468,279.
2. Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce, 9,920 hours, \$1,154,838.
3. Wisconsin Hospital Association Inc. (WHA), 8,403 hours, \$1,120,365.
4. Wisconsin Counties Association, 9,062 hours, \$821,169.
5. Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, 3,458 hours, \$784,315.
6. AT&T Wisconsin, 1,925 hours, \$715,969.
7. Wisconsin Insurance Alliance, 1,342 hours, \$697,613
8. League of Wisconsin Municipalities, 4,210, \$554,994.
9. Wisconsin Automobile and Truck Dealers Association Inc., 2,873 hours, \$548,550.
10. Wisconsin Medical Society, 4,920 hours, \$547,060.

[Senate Bill 509](#), which allowed operation of larger agricultural vehicles on highways, was the most-lobbied bill during the session, and became law in April 2014. [SB 1](#), which created an expedited process and modified permitting standards for iron mining in Wisconsin, was the second most-lobbied bill, and became law in March 2013. Another mining bill, AB 426, was the second most-lobbied bill in 2011-2012, but did not pass in that session.

Also making the Top 10 most-lobbied bills were:

3. [Senate Bill 302](#) relating to high capacity well approvals.
4. [Assembly Bill 711](#), relating to changes to the worker’s compensation law.
5. [Senate Bill 349](#), relating to nonmetallic mining.
6. [Assembly Bill 19](#), relating to torts and personal injury trusts.
7. [Assembly Bill 139](#), relating to the duty of a physician to inform patients of treatment options.
8. [Senate Bill 286](#), relating to the student information system and school accountability.
9. [Senate Bill 300](#), relating to oral chemotherapy copayments and deductibles.
10. [Assembly Bill 200](#), the law governing motor vehicle warranty.

Becker noted that 101,732 hours, nearly one-quarter of lobbyists’ time in 2013-2014, was spent lobbying on issues before any related bills were introduced. Lobbyists report this under “[Topics](#)” on the lobbying website. Once a bill is introduced, lobbyists report their activities by bill number.

By law, any organization that compensates an individual to lobby state government on five or more days in a six-month period must register and 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. The first six-month reports for the current session are due July 31, 2015.

The public can view real-time reports on the lobbying website by clicking the “[What Are They Lobbying About?](#)” link.

The public can use the Eye on Lobbying website to search the lobbying database and run three basic reports showing total lobbying expenditures, sorted by the amount of money spent, numbers of hours spent, or alphabetically by the name of the lobbying principal. In addition, the G.A.B. staff has produced several custom reports, including lobbying summaries and detailed lists of which bills and subjects received the most lobbying effort. These reports are available on the G.A.B. website: <http://gab.wi.gov/publications/reports/lobbying/2013-2014-lobbying-summary>.

[Under Wisconsin law](#), lobbyists are forbidden 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.