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PETTY

WAITING IN THE LOBBY

A PAPER PRESENTED TO THE SPHEX CLUB - - OCTOBER 21, 1993

When last before this august body over two years ago, I reflected on the challenge presented by membership in Sphex to venture into areas of inquiry outside of one's familiar and ordinary routine. Based in part on personal experience but more on a personal interest in the functioning, and non-functioning, of the American political system at the local, state and federal levels, this seemed to be an appropriate opportunity for some reflections and observations on what many consider to be the most powerful players in the system - - the lobbyists who influence and manipulate the political process on behalf of their clients.

Some of the comments you will hear may sound like a justification for the "populist rhetoric" of now-president but then-candidate Clinton and Ross Perot in the 1992 presidential campaign. But, as you will see, the growing influence of lobbyists, and the power of other "influence groups" such as political action committees, or PACs, is nothing new and has a long history. What may be new is the growing public clamor to curb the remarkable growth of this influence and power.

In his farewell address on January 14, 1981, President Jimmy Carter expressed concern about the proliferation of single-

interest groups, which he said was "a disturbing factor" that "tends to distort our purposes, because the national interest is not always the sum of all our single or special interests." But, in spite of public clamor and comments like these, little has been produced in the way of restrictions on lobbyists or the way they operate. The dilemma for would-be reformers is that lobbying derives from basic constitutional rights of free speech, free association and freedom to petition the government.

Before going further, the whole subject of influencing legislation is a complex one about which much has been written and spoken by those far more knowledgeable than your speaker. So, I do not stand here, as Mark Twain was supposed to have said, ". . . with the calm confidence of a Christian with four aces." And, ". . . giving credit where credit is due", as Dr. John Turner reminded us to do in his 1989 (March) address to Spheeris, the source of much of the material for this paper came from newspaper articles collected over the past three years. Valuable contributions also came from Jeffrey H. Birnbaum's book: "The Lobbyists - How Influence Peddlers Get Their Way In Washington", published by Times Books, a division of Random House, Inc., in 1992, as well as from the publishers of the Congressional Quarterly, Inc.

Birnbaum's book refers to lobbyists in Washington alone as an "industry that, by some estimates, has doubled in size in just

the past 10 years". This means, according to Birnbaum, who covers the White House for the Wall Street Journal, that "more than 80,000 lobbyists. . . descend upon our national government, informing and bartering with Congress and blocking legislation on behalf of the richest business interests in the country". Other estimates of the number of lobbyists operating inside the beltway [Washington, D.C.] may not be quite as high. The actual number of lobbyists in Washington is unclear because the 1946 Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act requires financial disclosure - - and registration - - only by those whose "principal purpose" is lobbying. This registration law is unspecific - - and some would say unenforceable - - and does not cover many of the lobbyists who refer to themselves as political consultants, lawyers, foreign representatives, legislative specialists, consumer advocates, trade association representatives or government affairs specialists. In any event, the growth has been phenomenal compared to the 3,000 to 4,000 lobbyists in Washington between 1965 and 1975. The numbers are impressive on the state level as well. The News & Daily Advance, on June 27, 1990, published a chart showing 5.7 lobbyists [42,596] for every state legislator in the country [7,461].

Before rushing to a negative judgment on lobbyists, it must be recognized that lobbyists have gradually gained a more

positive image. Over the years, the public began to recognize that pressure groups and their agents, the lobbyists, perform some important and indispensable jobs. Lobbyists are experts in government and help inform legislators and the public about problems and issues. Lobbyists stimulate public debate, sometimes provide access for the wronged and needy, and make known to legislators practical aspects of proposed legislation - - whom it would help, whom it would hurt, who is for and who is against it. A considerable amount of technical information and research is produced by lobbyists on legislative proposals for consideration by legislators who are frequently under great pressure and time constraints.

But, lobbyists are not generally held in high esteem across the political spectrum. Birnbaum observes that, taken as a group, they are a kind of underclass in the nation's capital - - a lower caste that is highly compensated, in part, to make up for their relatively low stature in the city's severely stratified culture. Frequently they suffer the indignity of standing in hallways or reception areas for hours at a time. Their's are the first appointments cancelled or postponed when other business calls. They do not even like to be called "lobbyists". They prefer "consultants" or "lawyers". They also use euphemisms like "When I left the Hill. . ." to describe the moment they left the congressional payroll to take a lobbying job.

One lobbyist put his predicament succinctly: "My mother has never introduced me to her friends as 'my son, the lobbyist.' My son, the Washington representative, maybe. or the legislative consultant. or the government-relations counsel. But never as the lobbyist. I can't say I blame her. Being a lobbyist has long been synonymous in the minds of many Americans with being a glorified pimp." (id. 7)

What seems to lie at the heart of the problem with lobbyists, and other influence peddlers, is typified in a Virginia poll taken by Media-General, Associated Press in 1990 finding that an overwhelming majority of those responding said state legislators are overly influenced by gifts or campaign contributions from lobbyists (the News 6/27/90). Added to this are public perceptions that lobbyists, and those they seek to influence, respond to greed, big money, and create a distorted vision of what is really good for the country. You can add to this mix what one publication describes as the "public disgust with Washington insiderism" (The Nation, May 31, 1993, p. 728) and the cynical and common complaint that "all politics are crooked."

For some perspective of the role of lobbying, we will look briefly at its history at the federal level.

HISTORY OF FEDERAL LOBBYING

Among English-speaking nations, the concept of lobbying goes back to A.D. 1215, when King John granted the English barons the right to petition him to protest any violation of their new rights under the Magna Carta. This concept was included in the First Amendment to the constitution and the right "to petition the government for a redress of grievances" remains the basis for lobbying in the United States today.

From the beginning, lobbying tactics were used by business interests trying to win the upper hand in influencing the nation's leaders. After each legislative day, barrels of wine and port poured freely at lavish meals and the check was paid by the wealthy merchants of the day.

Another pattern also fell quickly into place: bribery. One of the first issues facing the new Congress when it met in New York in 1789 was whether to fund the national debt and to assume the debts of the states. The proposal produced a close fight. It is widely believed that the money changers who stood to profit most from the action bought Delaware Representative John Vining's deciding vote on the issue. Rumor had it that the bribe was a thousand guineas, but Senator William Maclay of Pennsylvania

doubted it. He wrote in his journal that Vining's vote was probably purchased "for a tenth part of the sum."

The word "lobbyist" was first used in Britain to refer to journalists who stood in lobbies at the House of Commons, waiting to interview news makers. By 1829 the phrase "lobby-agents" was being applied to special favor-seekers hovering in the New York Capitol lobby at Albany. By 1832 the term had been shortened to lobbyist and was in wide use at the U.S. Capitol. Newspaper reporters and political cartoonists compounded the stereotyped image of lobbyists by portraying them as sinister, portly, cigar-smoking individuals who held legislators completely in their control.

An often-cited example of a conflict-of-interest problem arose during President Andrew Jackson's second term in 1833 when Jackson sought to deflate the powerful financier Nicholas Biddle by withdrawing federal deposits from the Bank of the United States, of which Biddle was president. Biddle was supported by Daniel Webster, then a senator from Massachusetts. Webster's conviction on the issue was fueled not so much by principle as by cash. Webster, who would later be Secretary of State, wrote to Biddle: "If it is wished that my relation to the bank should be continued, it may be well to send me the usual retainers." After an eloquent speech by Webster in the Senate on the bank's behalf,

Biddle paid him \$10,000.00. In all, Webster got \$32,000.00 in what today would be seen as bribes, but was then business as usual. It is interesting to note that bribes are still "business as usual" in many other countries with two recent examples being the scandals and resignations in the Japanese and Italian governments.

One of the most heavy-handed corporate advocates in the 1850's was Samuel Colt, the famous gun maker. He paid a "contingent fee" of \$10,000.00 to one Congressman, and probably to many others, for not attacking a bill to extend a patent that would help sales. Colt hired Alexander Hay, a lobbyist who distributed beautifully decorated revolvers to the lawmakers. Colt also dispensed other, more attractive gratuities: to-wit, three young women known as Spiritualists, who, according to one account, were very active in "moving with the members" of Congress.

Woodrow Wilson was the first of many U.S. presidents to challenge the authority of the business lobby and made this part of his campaign in 1912. When he was a professor, Wilson studied the impact of lobbyists in Washington and concluded that it was overbearing and dangerous. When he took office in 1913, he in effect told the lobbyists to leave town but they did not stay away for long. During the 1920's, special interests began again

to win in Washington. In 1927, the Caraway Committee under Senator Thaddeus Caraway, an Arkansas Democrat, uncovered a variety of lobbying practices, including the revelation that most lobbying was simply fraud. Fully 90% of the nearly 400 lobbying groups listed in the Washington telephone directory were "fakes," the committee said, whose primary aim was not to affect legislation but to bilk clients. For example, one enterprising lobbyist had collected \$60,000.00 in one year from business executives by doing nothing more than writing letters to them every time a bill passed that they might favor, and claiming sole credit for its passage. The Caraway Committee recommended a lobbyist-registration bill, which passed the Senate without dissent, but it died in the House - - thanks to - - guess what? - - to the pressure of lobbyists.

As I mentioned earlier, Congress did pass the Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act in 1946. This law required lobbyists to register in Congress and report the amount and sources of their income from lobbying. There was no attempt to limit lobbying; that would violate the First Amendment right to petition the government. But the law defined a lobbyist as a person or organization whose job was to influence the passage or defeat of legislation, and who received money for that purpose. This law covered both direct lobbying and indirect, grass-roots-

style lobbying, which involved stirring up contacts from actual voters back home. But this law was largely ignored from the very beginning. Even under the weak new disclosure law, Representative Frank Buchanan, a Democrat from Pennsylvania investigating lobbying activities, disclosed in 1950 that the number of registered lobbyists had more than doubled in just two years to 2,074. "I firmly believe," he concluded, "that the business of influencing legislation is a billion-dollar industry.". This was a handsome sum in 1950 and your speaker has no estimate of the size of this business 43 years later.

In the early 1950's, a congressional committee again recommended strengthening the lobbying law, but no action was taken. Instead, in 1954, the Supreme Court, in U.S. v. Harriss, opened more loopholes in the statute. The court narrowed the coverage of the law by exempting many types of lobbyists from its disclosure requirements. The court decided that the law did not require all interests that spent money on lobbying to register - only those that solicited and collected money specifically with lobbying in mind. It also said that organizations were required to register only if they had lobbying as their "principal purpose" when they collected the funds. What's more, only direct contacts with legislators were considered lobbying; indirect pressure, such as the growing practice of grass-roots lobbying,

was excluded. Robert Drinan, former dean of the Boston College Law School and later a member of Congress, described the lobbying act as a "judicial shambles." and that, Birnbaum states, thanks to lobbyists, is where it remains today!

During the 1960's, senior executives of corporations increasingly were used as lobbyists, but always under the strict guidance of their Washington consultants. One of the top Washington lobbyists during this period was Clark Clifford, a lawyer, and the very picture of corporate influence in the 60's. Clifford perhaps epitomizes the most powerful tool at a lobbyists' disposal - - that is, access! Clifford was special counsel to Truman from 1946 to 1950. He helped write the law that created the Central Intelligence Agency. He coordinated President Kennedy's transition to office and acted as a trusted advisor to him. Later, he played an important behind the scenes role in ending the nation's steel strike. All of this put him on a first name basis with most of the power base in Washington during this period. Perhaps he should have checked the credentials of his client more thoroughly after his implication in the recent BCCI banking scandal [Bank of Credit and Commerce International].

Lobbying has not been without other scandals in recent years. Big-money lobbyists not only courted lawmakers, but also

their staffs during the 1960's, often flying them for weekend retreats to farms in Virginia and duck blinds on the eastern shore of Maryland. Most of us in SpheX remember the most famous victim of this temptation for fancy living - - Robert G. (Bobby) Baker from Pickens, South Carolina. Baker is a case study in how public officials can be ensnared by private interests. Baker was secretary to the Democratic majority in the Senate. With a salary of \$19,600.00 a year, he managed to accumulate assets of \$2,166,886.00 in less than nine years. It is obvious that someone thought he was in a position to influence members of the Democratic majority in the Senate.

Improper contacts with lobbyists were also part of the Watergate scandal when investigations revealed that a number of American corporations violated federal law that prohibited them from contributing to the campaigns of federal officer-seekers. Some of those funds - in cash - found their way into the hands of the Republican operatives who broke into the Democratic party headquarters in 1972.

In recent years, foreign interests have increasingly hired Washington lobbyists. A scandal developed in 1976 when *The Washington Post* reported that South Korean agents, led by Tong Sun Park, a notorious Korean businessman and Washington socialite, gave between \$500,000.00 and \$1,000,000.00 a year in

cash and gifts to members of Congress to help maintain "a favorable legislative climate" for South Korea. In 1978 the House reprimanded three California Democrats for their part in the scandal and Richard T. Hanna, a former California congressman, when to prison.

During the 1980's, it is rare to find lobbying as heavy-handed as Tong Sun Park and modern pressure on legislative bodies also appears to be rarely corrupt. Techniques of lobbying have become more sophisticated and complex aided by communication and, of course, more money. The phenomenal growth of lobbying during the 1980's and early 1990's has been driven by two factors. First, a series of internal reforms in the Congress changing rules and procedures in both the House and Senate and seizing power that had been held for decades by a small group of men with tight grips on the various committees - - what we knew as the self-perpetuating power of the seniority system. Many of us here in Spheeris remember the power of the "boll weevils", the committee chairman of senior southern senators.

Suddenly more power was dispersed through many new subcommittees - - which had new chairmen - - especially in the House. This meant an explosion of staff members to handle the nuts-and-bolts work. In turn came the explosion of lobbyists to persuade them. And with it came a new kind of lobbyist, one who

knew more than just a few key members, one who could talk to staff as well as members, one who was more knowledgeable and sophisticated.

It also became easier for lobbyists and special interest groups to find out where to apply pressure. A 1970 law did away with the system that had allowed anonymous votes on amendments on the House floor and another law required that roll-call votes in closed committee hearings be made public. Also open to the public in 1975 were the long-secret House-Senate conference committees that worked out differences between the two houses over bills.

The second factor has been the meteoric rise of political action committees or PACs, from 608 in 1974 to 4,195 in 1992 (The News & Daily Advance March 14, 1993). Although their numbers are large, PACs are now required to disclose where their campaign money is coming from and where it is going. This does not mean that PACs are not influential. The concern about PACs is that they give congressional incumbents an edge over challenges. In last year's races (1992) for example, PACs gave Senate and House incumbents six times as much as they gave to their challengers. In the end, only five Senators and 32 House members were beaten by challengers in an election year that was supposed to be a major change in American politics (The News 3/14/93).

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Let me turn now to the personal experience mentioned earlier. In the mid-1980's, I was involved with efforts by Liberty University to exempt its campus property from real estate taxation. Litigation was already pending in the Virginia Supreme Court on this issue when Liberty decided to petition the Lynchburg City Council to support legislation in the General Assembly to exempt the campus property. The litigation and the petition were controversial, as are most things with which Dr. Jerry Falwell is associated, and drew wide-spread attention and commentary.

Liberty's request for the support of City Council provided a good example of lobbying at the local level by individuals, groups and organizations on both sides of the issue. For example, technical information was assembled and presented regarding the economic impact of the school on the community and the adverse consequences that would result if the campus was relocated to another community. This has been one of the traditional functions of legitimate lobbying and is frequently used on the local level by those seeking to either support or block action by a local government. Approaching local governing

officials with information and organizing support in the community on behalf of legislation, such as in this case, is a time-honored lobbying technique and is totally consistent with the constitutional right to "petition the Government for redress of grievances." I would venture to say that most members of Spheeris have, at one time or another, approached a member of City Council to express support either for or against a pending issue. What separates local governing bodies from state and federal bodies is visibility and accessibility. Direct contact by the public with local governing bodies for the purpose of influencing legislation is an accepted practice in this country and seldom involves the use of professional lobbyists.

But once we leave the local level, the situation changes. After a lengthy public hearing in the E.C. Glass high school auditorium, City Council adopted an ordinance [September, 1986] in support of Liberty's request for tax exemption by the General Assembly. One of the first recommendations I made was to engage professional help to guide our efforts in the General Assembly. For those of you familiar with the legislative session in Richmond, you know of the huge agenda of bills, committee and sub-committee meetings, roll-call votes, time constraints, and the hectic pace of life that pervades the session. The Liberty request, and of course Dr. Falwell, had attracted national media

attention and someone was needed to provide that key element, access, to the legislators to tell the University's story. Like it or not, this was the reality we faced and so we contacted Anthony F. (Tony) Troy and Junius L. (Junie) Bradshaw, both of whom are lawyers in Richmond with an office in close proximity to Capitol Square and who are registered lobbyists providing their services to clients willing to pay their fees. In return, the client is provided an entree into the network of people inside the legislature who were able to get things done. Tony Troy served briefly as Attorney General of Virginia when Andrew P. (Andy) Miller stepped down to run for governor. Junie Bradshaw had served in the General Assembly and had been one of the three members of the State Corporation Commission. Between them, they knew most people on Capitol Square during the legislative session.

In his book, Birnbaum would describe Troy and Bradshaw as "guns-for-hire" (id p. 20) who are now becoming prominent in Washington. These are highly proficient and knowledgeable people but their allegiance is for sale. One amusing quote from a lobbyist interviewed in his book concerning an issue before Congress was "I don't have a dog in that fight, and don't have a position." He added, "I will have a position as soon as I get a dog." And in not too long a time, he would (id p. 32).

To a lobbyist, access is the key to influence and a good example was provided by Troy and Bradshaw in setting up a meeting between the late Warren Stambaugh and Dr. Falwell. Stambaugh had been an A.C.L.U. [American Civil Liberties Union] lawyer and legislator from northern Virginia. Stambaugh sat on a key committee in the House and had expressed his hesitation to support Liberty because of philosophical and religious differences. Troy and Bradshaw persuaded Stambaugh to have an early breakfast with Falwell at the Commonwealth Park Hotel adjacent to Capitol Square. I was fortunate to be at that meeting. The debate was a classic. Each allowed the other to express his views and, in the end, in a most unlikely scenario, Stambaugh supported the legislation in the House. Stambaugh felt that what was constitutionally permitted for other institutions of higher learning should be permitted for Liberty and was quoted in the press as saying "If politics makes strange bedfellows, then so does the constitution. We're doing it in the same spirit of fairness that we do all of this" (The News & Daily Advance February 24, 1987).

The bill to exempt the Liberty campus finally passed and became law. Troy and Bradshaw were honest and straightforward in their approach to legislators and were professional in every respect. There is no question in my mind that for Liberty to

have gone to the General Assembly without the assistance of a paid lobbyists would have been the height of folly. After watching the legislative process at work, I was reminded of the old saying that, "There are two things you should not watch being made - - sausage and legislation."

The General Assembly requires lobbyists to register, and have identification cards and file financial disclosure forms at the end of each session explaining compensation and expenses. Yet, in 1993, lobbyists on both sides of the hotly debated gun control issue did not list as expenses thousands of dollars in advertising costs (The News & Daily Advance May 11, 1993) citing an ambiguity in the registration statute. The beat goes on at the state level. More than 1,100 lobbyists and 661 groups spent \$4.6 million influencing legislators in the 1993 General Assembly. That is a record for an odd-year short session, topping the 1991 figure of \$3.9 million. (The News & Daily Advance May 11, 1993).

[Among the top spenders in the 1993 General Assembly were:

American Petroleum Institute	\$ 98,976.00
Texaco USA	73,678.00
Virginia Education Association	71,274.00
Medical Society of Virginia	63,226.00
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Virginia	58,225.00

Virginia Chamber of Commerce	56,534.00
C & P Telephone	51,506.00
American Tobacco Institute	37,620.00
Phillip Morris USA	24,679.00]

MONEY, REFORM AND THE FUTURE

I have spoken of the great public perception that legislators are overly influenced by gifts or campaign contributions from lobbyists. It certainly does not help this perception when PACs, who are allowed to donate up to \$10,000.00 per election to a candidate, gave \$180 million in House and Senate races in 1992. The total spending for Senate and House races in 1992 is staggering. The total spent on those races in 1992 was \$678 million, an increase of over \$200 million from 1990. This kind of money brings to mind an expression of Will Rogers, who died in 1935, that "Politics has got so expensive that it takes lots of money to even get beat with!"

The negative perception isn't helped when high profile lobbyists step into government roles and vice versa. Ron Brown, who is now Secretary of Commerce, earned \$580,000.00 last year from Patton, Boggs & Blow, a Washington law firm that plays a major lobbying role. Brown has been referred to as "the

consummate Washington lobbyist", who also served last year as chairman of the Democratic National Committee, a job for which he was paid another \$89,000.00 (Wall Street Journal January 21, 1993). Another is Mickey Kantor, the present U.S. trade representative, who made more than \$314,000.00 from another Washington law firm heavily engaged in lobbying activities (WSJ January 21, 1993). The "revolving door" is also prevalent at the state level. In the 1990 session of the Virginia General Assembly, five cabinet secretaries under Governor (Gerald L.) Baliles became lobbyists.

Let us now reflect for a moment and ask ourselves "Where are we now?" and "What about the future?". Perhaps this paper may lack the balancing of all viewpoints and it is certainly not intended to convey only pessimism or cynical comment but, rather, its purpose is to focus our collective intellect on both perception and reality. I would like to think that an even deeper purpose would be to stimulate our thinking regarding the future of our political system. It seems timely to debate such questions as: Will the system (and I refer here to the "system" as the legislative process) finally engulf us? Is the system now, or soon will be, too complex to control? Is the system non-responsive to the people and is there ultimate good to society from the money and influence provided by special interests?

Arguably, the appeal of "populist rhetoric" played a large part in the election of our current president as it did in the campaigns of Truman and Carter. But, ironically, the man most accepted in the last presidential campaign was the richest candidate, Ross Perot. Perhaps he articulated what Professor Walter Dean Burnham, professor of government at the University of Texas at Austin, means when he said "What people want is a sense that they are connected to the government - - the notion of virtual representation" (Wall Street Journal January 21, 1993).

This whole subject of influencing legislation, including trade associations, PACs, grass-roots movements, major campaign contributors and paid lobbyists leaves us to reflect on "system overload" and whether our political system, which is over 200 years old, has become too complex and perhaps even unresponsive to the people. We must ask ourselves whether the talk of reform in our system is just a gripe or complaint by those outside the power structure against those on the inside or is it really sympathetic of a broader based need to examine ourselves.

Talk of change and reform has been prevalent in Washington beginning with the 110 freshman Congressmen who rode to office on the anti-establishment tide of the 1992 election and has continued with the arrival of the Clinton administration blasting lobbyists as the "guardians of gridlock" (The News May 7, 1993).

The tax act passed earlier this year [the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993] does contain a provision which disallows an income tax deduction for lobbying expenses paid after December 31, 1993. And the Senate, on May 6, 1993, passed its version of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1993. This is a far-reaching overhaul of loophole-ridden laws requiring those paid to influence Congress and the Executive Branch to register and provide details about their activities. Under pressure from public interest groups, such as Common Cause, the Senate approved an amendment to require lobbyists to disclose financial benefits including meals and entertainment worth more than \$20.00 given to members of Congress. This amendment was said to be unpopular, but few wanted to vote against it, so the Senate passed it by voice vote. Also passed by the Senate was a non-binding amendment calling for greater restrictions on gifts to members, who can now accept an unlimited number of gifts worth less than \$100.00 as well as travel reimbursement and meals. Under present law, reimbursements for travel related to speaking engagements, fact-finding trips, charity golf tournaments and similar events, as well as meals and drinks, do not count as gifts. It is not difficult to predict that this bill, in its present form, will not likely pass in the House.

Closely related to the lobbyist disclosure legislation is a campaign finance bill that the Senate approved on June 17. This bill contains the concept of banning lobbyists from making contributions for one year after contacting an elected official or staff member as well as no lobbying contact for a year after sending the check to an elected official or candidate. President Bush vetoed a campaign finance bill in 1992 and the present bill, which is said to be a top priority in the present administration, would, in addition to certain lobbying reforms, limit campaign spending and PAC contributions and provide partial public funding, a concept that some Congressmen refer to as "food stamps for politicians." (The News & Advance March 14, 1993). One lawyer who studied the campaign finance bill for Democratic clients said, "This thing needs a doctor." The doctor he suggested was "Dr. Kevorkian" [the Michigan doctor who developed assisted suicide] (Congressional Quarterly August 14, 1993, p. 2215). Like the Lobbying Disclosure Act passed by the Senate in May, the campaign finance bill has little chance of passage in its present form if and when it reaches the House.

CONCLUSION

Where does this all leave us? More gridlock? - perhaps so. But in my view the most important aspect of any legislation

dealing with lobbying is the concept of disclosure. Even if nothing remains in the final version of the Lobbying Disclosure Act passed by the Senate in May, and now in Committee in the House, but stronger registration and financial disclosure requirements, our political system will benefit. Public scrutiny would then become a driving force behind any future reform movement in the area of lobbying. A free and investigative press would inform the public on those matters required to be disclosed and would subject real and perceived abuses in our system to the ultimate accountability to the people when they exercise their power to vote.

We said that the right to petition the government for redress and the freedom of speech and association form the basics for lobbying in this country. It is one of the strengths of the American political system that public scrutiny assisted by the investigative reporting of the media, whose is also guaranteed the right of free speech, may be the best guardian of that system.

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