

Summary of Legislation

This bill clarifies the definition of "client" and requires that lobbyists provide additional disclosure statements to the Secretary of State when the General Assembly is in a regular or special session. These new disclosure statements must be filed electronically within 48 hours after:

- a lobbyist agrees to lobby on new legislation for either an existing or a new client; or
- a lobbyist takes a new position on an existing bill or new legislation for either an existing client or a new client.

These disclosures must include the bill number of the legislation under consideration and whether the lobbyist's client is supporting, opposing, amending, or monitoring the legislation.

No later than July 1, 2019, the Secretary of State must convene a working group to consider upgrades to the electronic filing system for lobbyists, to consider ways to improve the use of the system, and ways to increase overall transparency. The working group must meet at least once prior to December 31, 2019, and may meet as often as necessary. The secretary must report the conclusions of the working group as part of the presentation of the Department of State to its committee of reference at the State Measurement for Accountable, Responsive, and Transparent Government Act (SMART Act) hearing.

State Expenditures

The bill creates a one-time expenditure of \$38,160 for the Department of State to update its electronic filing system for lobbyists. Currently, lobbyists provide monthly filings with the Secretary of State, which are publicly available on its website. This bill requires additional disclosures within a 48-hour time period, which will necessitate approximately 360 hours of contracted IT staff to modify the existing filing system at a rate of \$106 per hour.

Convening a working group and reporting conclusions to the legislature can be accomplished with existing resources and does not require additional appropriations to the department.

Effective Date

The bill was signed into law by the Governor and took effect on May 20, 2019.

State Appropriations

Consistent with this final fiscal note, for FY 2019-20, the bill includes an appropriation of \$38,160 to the Department of State from the Department of State Cash Fund.

State and Local Government Contacts

Secretary Of State