

SUMMARY: An ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 5 by adding Section 5.023 entitled "Regulation of Lobbyists".

BILL NO. 1898

ORDINANCE NO. 1707

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING WASHOE COUNTY CODE CHAPTER 5 BY ADDING SECTION 5.023 ENTITLED "REGULATION OF LOBBYISTS" REQUIRING LOBBYISTS TO MAKE CERTAIN DISCLOSURES WHEN PROVIDING PUBLIC COMMENT; ESTABLISHING CIVIL PENALTIES; AND OTHER MATTERS PROPERLY RELATING THERETO.

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF WASHOE DO ORDAIN:

**SECTION 1.** Chapter 5 of the Washoe County Code is hereby amended by adding the following new section, § 5.023, which shall read as follows:

**Sec. 5.023.1 - Definitions.**

- (a) "Communication" or "communicate" means all forms of communication, whether in person, in writing or in electronic form, intended to influence a Policymaker on any matter over which the Board of County Commissioners has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.
- (b) "Family member" means a person's spouse, parent, or child.
- (c) "Policymaker" means a County Commissioner.
- (d) "Lobbyist" means a person who receives anything of value to communicate with a Policymaker on behalf of someone other than himself or herself to influence a Policymaker to take action on any matter over which the Policymaker has supervision, control, jurisdiction or advisory power. "Lobbyist" does not include:
  - (1) Persons who make formal appearances at public meetings on behalf of other parties on adjudicatory matters being considered by the Board of County Commissioners or other public

bodies created by or overseen by the Board of County Commissioners and who clearly identify themselves and the persons or entities for whom they are appearing.

- (2) Employees of a bona fide news medium who communicate with Policymakers for the sole purpose of carrying out their news gathering function.
- (3) County staff communicating with a Policymaker within the course and scope of their employment or in furtherance of negotiations with any recognized employee organization pursuant to NRS Chapter 288.
- (4) Employees and elected officers of the State of Nevada, the federal government, and other local governments, agencies, and Indian tribes communicating with a Policymaker within the course and scope of their employment or the office to which they were elected.
- (5) Persons who communicate with a Policymaker within the course and scope of any judicial proceeding.

**Sec. 5.023. - Disclosure**

When registering to provide public comment when appearing before a Policymaker at a public meeting a lobbyist must identify themselves as a paid lobbyist on the public comment registration form and provide on the public comment registration form the name of each person or entity by whom the lobbyist is retained or employed or on whose behalf they are appearing.

**Sec. 5.023.4 - Violations and penalties.**

- (a) Any person who knowingly violates this chapter is subject to a civil penalty in an amount not to exceed \$500.
- (b) The Washoe County District Attorney may recover the penalty in a civil action brought in the name of Washoe County in Reno Justice Court or Sparks Justice Court.

**SECTION 2.** This Ordinance shall be in effect after its passage, adoption, and publication in one issue of a newspaper printed

and published in Washoe County.

**SECTION 3.** The County Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to have this Ordinance published in one issue of the Reno-Gazette Journal, a newspaper printed and published in the City of Reno.

[Business Impact Note: The Board of County Commissioners hereby finds that this ordinance does not impose a direct and significant economic burden upon a business, nor does it directly restrict the formation, operation or expansion of a business.]

Proposed on the 15 day of August, 2023.

Proposed by Commissioner Hill.

Passed on the 19 day of September, 2023.

Vote:

Ayes: Hill, Garcia, Andriola

Nays: Herman, Clark

Absent: None



A handwritten signature in blue ink, likely belonging to the Chair of the Washoe County Commission, is written over a horizontal line.

Chair  
Washoe County Commission

This ordinance shall be in force and effect from and after  
September 29, 2023.