



Minnesota  
State Bar  
Association

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March 11, 2025

**Re: HF2105**

The Minnesota State Bar Association (MSBA) is a voluntary professional organization that represents approximately 13,000 attorneys throughout the state. The MSBA urges support for Section 2 of HF2105, which will clarify what constitutes lobbying activities and prevent unnecessary regulation.

Under the 2023 lobbyist registration changes, a wide variety of interactions with local government bodies would be considered lobbying — even communications that are not intended to influence policymaking. Individuals frequently engage with local government bodies when those bodies are not creating new policies but are simply applying existing ordinances to specific facts. Examples of this include decisions on variances, conditional use permits, site-plan reviews, subdivision plats, zoning code violations, and many planning commission decisions.

If the lobbyist registration law is not modified, many Minnesotans will be required to register as lobbyists even though they are merely dealing with the application of already existing local government policies. Section 2 of HF2105 addresses this by exempting situations involving the application or administration of a statute, rule, or ordinance. This proposal would still require lobbyist registration for anyone attempting to influence the policymaking functions of political subdivisions, but it would not require registration for anyone engaging in the court-like proceedings of political subdivisions, during which ordinances are applied rather than created.

This proposal is consistent with an existing provision in Ch. 10A subd. 2, which provides that, with limited exceptions, “administrative action” does not include a state agency’s “application or administration” of existing rules. If such a policy is appropriate at the state agency level, it should be appropriate for political subdivisions. In addition, at least four other states (AZ, FL, MA, and SC) have similar exemptions in their lobbying registration laws.

Section 2 of HF2105 will continue to require lobbyist registration for activities that fit within traditional definitions of lobbying, but it will remove the unnecessary registration burden for individuals who are merely dealing with the practical application of existing local government policies. The MSBA encourages support for this common-sense change.

Sincerely,

Bryan Lake  
MSBA lobbyist