



State of Vermont

Office of the Secretary of State
128 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-1101

[phone] 802-828-2363
[fax] 802-828-2496
www.sec.state.vt.us

James C. Condos, Secretary of State
Christopher D. Winters, Deputy Secretary

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Contact: Jim Condos, 802-828-2148

PRESS RELEASE

**Secretary of State Jim Condos On
New Lobbyist Disclosure Legislation – Improves Transparency**

Today the legislature passed S.93, a bill requiring increased disclosure by lobbyists and their employers. I applaud the legislature for passing this bill which, if signed by the Governor, will give Vermont one of the strongest lobbyist disclosure laws in the country.

S. 93 is about increased transparency and accountability, my top priority as Secretary of State. Vermonters deserve to know, in a meaningful way and with reasonable frequency, who is spending money to influence the decisions being made by their representatives. They deserve to know how much is being spent, and what it is being spent on. By giving Vermonters greater access to this information, they are better equipped to hold their representatives accountable for the decisions they make and the reasons they make them.

S.93 significantly increases the frequency of required disclosures by lobbyists and their employers during the legislative session. Under current law, these disclosures occur only once during the legislative session, at the end of April. Under the bill being sent to the Governor, these disclosures will now occur on a monthly basis during the session, with a report due every month between February and June.

Additionally, S.93 has a new requirement calling for lobbyists and their employers to file a disclosure report with our office within 48 hours of spending \$1,000 or more on any advertising campaign. This new mass media report is the first of its kind in the country, shining a light on who is behind those attack ads we so often see in political campaigns. Vermonters should be proud to be setting a new bar for the disclosure of lobbying activities in their legislature.

This year, my office has introduced a new online lobbying disclosure system which requires all disclosures to be filed online. As soon as they are filed, all of the information in those reports is immediately accessible to the public through a powerful web-based interface that allows Vermonters detailed, sortable, searchable access to all of the information.

Combined with our new disclosure system, the passage of S.93 will provide Vermonters with an unparalleled level of access to information regarding lobbying activities in Vermont.

S.93 is a tremendous step forward in accountability achieved through greater transparency. I am proud to have worked with the legislature to see this bill passed and to provide all Vermonters with increased access to this important information.