



The Issue: Ending Taxpayer-Funded Lobbying

Background:

By current statute, state agencies are prohibited from lobbying. Texas law also prohibits county associations from using county dues to lobby.

Texas Government code statute 89.002 states that “The commissioners court may spend, in the name of the county, money from the county's general fund for membership fees and dues of a nonprofit state association of counties if... *neither the association nor an employee of the association directly or indirectly influences or attempts to influence the outcome of any legislation pending before the legislature, except that this subdivision does not prevent a person from providing information for a member of the legislature or appearing before a legislative committee at the request of the committee or the member of the legislature...*”

In the recent legislative session, Texas Association of Counties and Texas Municipal League, both funded with public dollars, opposed taxpayer protections that would provide great public accountability and transparency to help provide “truth in taxation.” The county association also joined the cities’ lobby and opposed both appraisal and revenue caps. Texas Municipal League is also attempting to gut open meetings act.

In 2009, TAC and TML hired a total of 28 lobbyists, paying them an estimated total of \$634,999.94.

In addition to the publicly funded lobbyists hired by TAC and TML, local governments have their own taxpayer-funded lobbyists that work during the legislative session for more of your tax dollars. Last year 107 cities employed 196 lobbyists which cost taxpayers an estimated \$10,972,995.20. These figures do not include the millions of taxpayer dollars used to lobby by counties, school districts, municipal utility districts and hospital districts.

AFP estimates that millions of taxpayer dollars are spent lobbying in each session.

Current Party Platforms:

The **Republican Party of Texas** platform includes this issue under “Government Lobbying”. It currently reads: “*Government Lobbying – We oppose paying lobbyists with tax dollars*”

The **Libertarian Party of Texas, Constitution Party of Texas, Green Party, & Democratic Party** platforms do not include this issue.

Proposed Party Platform Language:

BE IT RESOLVED, that we support the passage of legislation that prohibits the use of tax dollars to hire lobbyists and that prohibits governments or government agencies to pay dues or fees to organizations, such as Texas Association of Counties and Texas Municipal League, that lobby or hire lobbyists.

Signed:

Who we are: Americans for Prosperity (AFP) is a nationwide organization of citizen leaders committed to advancing every individual's right to economic freedom and opportunity. AFP believes reducing the size and scope of government is the best safeguard to ensuring individual productivity and prosperity for all Americans. AFP educates and engages citizens in support of restraining state and federal government growth, and returning government to its constitutional limits. For more information, visit www.americansforprosperity.org