

By: Spiller

H.B. No. 755

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to certain requirements applicable to certain public entities that engage in lobbying.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 556, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 556.0056 to read as follows:

Sec. 556.0056. RESTRICTIONS ON LOBBYING EXPENDITURES AND REIMBURSEMENTS BY CERTAIN PUBLIC ENTITIES. (a) This section applies only to the following public entities:

(1) a political subdivision that imposes a tax;

(2) a political subdivision or special district that is authorized to issue bonds, including revenue bonds;

(3) a regional mobility authority;

(4) a transit authority;

(5) a regional tollway authority;

(6) a special purpose district, including a municipal utility district and a municipal management district;

(7) a public institution of higher education;

(8) a community college district;

(9) a publicly owned utility; and

(10) a river authority or water supply corporation.

(b) A public entity's governing body may not spend public money or provide other compensation to contract with a person required to register as a lobbyist under Chapter 305 to communicate

1 directly with one or more members of the legislative branch to
2 influence legislation pending before the legislature unless the
3 expenditure is:

4 (1) authorized by a majority vote of the governing
5 body in an open meeting of the governing body; and

6 (2) voted on by the governing body at the meeting as a
7 stand-alone item on the agenda.

8 (c) A public entity that contracts with a person required to
9 register as a lobbyist under Chapter 305 in accordance with this
10 section must publish on the entity's Internet website:

11 (1) the amount of money authorized to be spent under
12 Subsection (b) to contract with the person;

13 (2) the name of the person;

14 (3) a copy of the contract;

15 (4) the amount of money, if any, spent by the entity
16 for membership fees or dues to a nonprofit state association or
17 organization of similarly situated entities that contracts with a
18 person required to register as a lobbyist under Chapter 305; and

19 (5) a copy of any current legislative agenda or
20 resolution adopted by the entity.

21 (d) A person required to register as a lobbyist under
22 Chapter 305 that contracts with a public entity in accordance with
23 this section may not communicate directly with a member of the
24 legislative branch on behalf of the entity regarding legislation
25 pending before the legislature that specifically proposes to amend
26 Section 26.04(c) or 26.041(c), Tax Code.

27 (e) Notwithstanding other law, a public entity may not

1 reimburse a person required to register as a lobbyist under Chapter
2 305 for an expenditure the person made for food, beverages, or
3 entertainment.

4 (f) If a public entity does not comply with the requirements
5 of this section, a resident of or person receiving services from the
6 entity may file with the Texas Ethics Commission a sworn complaint
7 against the entity in accordance with Section 571.122.

8 (g) This section does not prevent an officer or employee of
9 a public entity from:

10 (1) providing information to a member of the
11 legislative branch;

12 (2) appearing before a legislative committee; or

13 (3) communicating directly with one or more members of
14 the legislative branch to influence legislation pending before the
15 legislature.

16 SECTION 2. Section 2254.030, Government Code, is repealed.

17 SECTION 3. Section 556.0056, Government Code, as added by
18 this Act, applies only to a payment or other compensation described
19 by that section made under a contract entered into on or after the
20 effective date of this Act. A contract entered into before the
21 effective date of this Act under which a payment or other
22 compensation described by that section is made is governed by the
23 law in effect on the date the contract was entered into, and the
24 former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

25 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.