

By: Hall

S.B. No. 1614

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the disclosure and recording of information on the use of money by certain public entities for lobbying activities; creating a criminal offense.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 556, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 556.010 to read as follows:

Sec. 556.010. DISCLOSURE AND RECORDING OF INFORMATION ON USE OF MONEY FOR LOBBYING ACTIVITIES. (a) This section applies to a public entity, including a political subdivision or a state agency, that receives public money or revenue from this state through an appropriation or other means.

(b) Not later than December 31 of each year, a public entity must prepare and submit to the Texas Ethics Commission and post on the entity's Internet website a written report that discloses:

(1) the total amount of money spent by the entity during the preceding year to directly or indirectly influence or attempt to influence the outcome of legislation;

(2) the name of each person required to register as a lobbyist under Chapter 305 who was compensated by the entity during the preceding year to directly or indirectly influence or attempt to influence the outcome of legislation;

(3) if applicable, the name of any organization for which the person described by Subdivision (2) is employed; and

1           (4) each line item in the entity's budget that  
2 indicates the amount of money spent by the entity to compensate a  
3 person described by Subdivision (2).

4           (c) Before spending money to directly or indirectly  
5 influence or attempt to influence the outcome of legislation, the  
6 governing body of a public entity shall vote by line item on whether  
7 to spend the money. The results of a vote held in accordance with  
8 this subsection must be included in the minutes of the meeting at  
9 which the vote was held along with, if applicable:

10           (1) the total amount of money authorized to be spent;

11           (2) the name of each person required to register as a  
12 lobbyist under Chapter 305 whom the entity plans to compensate as a  
13 result of the vote to directly or indirectly influence or attempt to  
14 influence the outcome of legislation; and

15           (3) the name of any organization for which the person  
16 described by Subdivision (2) is employed.

17           (d) A person designated by a public entity commits an  
18 offense by failing to disclose or record information on the use of  
19 money to directly or indirectly influence or attempt to influence  
20 the outcome of legislation as required by this section. An offense  
21 under this subsection is:

22           (1) for the first offense, a misdemeanor punishable by  
23 a fine of not more than \$100;

24           (2) for the second offense, a misdemeanor punishable  
25 by a fine of not less than \$100 and not more than \$500; and

26           (3) for the third and any subsequent offense, a Class B  
27 misdemeanor.

1           SECTION 2. Section 556.010, Government Code, as added by  
2 this Act, applies to the use of money to directly or indirectly  
3 influence or attempt to influence the outcome of legislation on or  
4 after the effective date of this Act.

5           SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.