



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MAINE

PO Box 863
Augusta, ME 04332-0863

(207) 622-0256
lwvme@gwi.net

TO: The Honorable Senator Lisa T. Marraché
The Honorable Representative John L. Patrick, Co-chairs
The Joint Standing Committee on Legal and Veterans Affairs

RE: LD 1051 An Act To Provide Information to the Public Regarding Lobbying and
Lobbyists Sponsor: Rep. Webster

The League of Women Voters of Maine is pleased to submit the following testimony concerning LD 1051. The League believes that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens at all levels of government.

The League supports lobbying disclosure that provides information on the pressures exerted on the policy-making process as a means of guaranteeing citizen access to influence that process. In order for citizen participation to be meaningful, a high level of transparency is required so that citizens can understand how laws and regulations are developed, where proposals originate, and who is influencing the process.

The League is in favor of the changes proposed by LD 1051 to §315 and §315-A that would provide additional information concerning a lobbyists' background, the companies they represent and the specific issues on which they lobby.

We also support making it mandatory that a photograph of each lobbyist appear in both the paper docket and on the disclosure website as a convenient way for legislators and the public to more easily identify lobbyists. We respectfully suggest, however, that in each instance, it should be a "current" photograph. It would not aid the goal of helping identify lobbyists if a decades old photograph were submitted.

The League also supports the proposed new section, §327, that would require lobbyists by statute to wear name tags when lobbying. This would assist the public and legislators in realizing when they are interacting with a lobbyist. However, we do not believe it is practical to require that the name tag state all the companies and clients for whom they lobby. Many Maine lobbyists represent multiple clients, and to list them all on a name tag would require either a very large surface, print so small as to be unreadable, or multiple name tags.

We respectfully suggest that this Committee add "current" before the word "photograph" in §315 and §315-A, and delete the employer/client name tag requirement. With those changes, we would urge the Committee to vote "ought to pass" on LD 1051.

Ann Luther, President
League of Women Voters of Maine
April 2, 2007