



ETHICS REPORTER

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Kentucky Legislative Ethics Commission
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<https://klec.ky.gov>

[Top Spending for the First Three Months of the 2026 Session](#)

During the 2026 session, 992 businesses and organizations employed 715 lobbyists, which shows an increase in more state lobbying by businesses and interest groups, and more money spent to influence state-based policies.

Lobbying spending for the first three months of the 2026 regular session hit an all-time record. Employers spent almost \$10.5 million on lobbying with lobbyists spending \$287,500 out of their own pockets for expenses associated with their lobbying effort. Combined, they have spent \$10.761 million to lobby the Kentucky General Assembly. The previous record for the same period was \$8.822 million, which was set in the 2025 session and the record prior to that was \$9.719 million set in the 2024 session.

During the first three months of this session, lobbyists have been compensated \$9,436,184 by employers. An additional \$398,813 was spent on lobbying related administrative costs, such as travel and other expenses. Spending on advertising was \$269,217 and \$369,811 was spent on receptions, meals and events.

The breakdown for lobbyist spending is \$269,507 for lobbying related expenses and \$17,993 for receptions, meals and events.

Below is the list of the top 20 spending employers during the first 3 months of 2026:

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|---|---|
| 1. KY Chamber of Commerce \$260,587 | 11. Americans for Prosperity \$59,889 |
| 2. KY Education Association \$175,207 | 12. LG&E and KU Energy LLC \$56,744 |
| 3. KY Justice Association \$81,984 | 13. KY Bankers Association \$56,502 |
| 4. KY Hospital Association \$69,989 | 14. KY Medical Association \$56,134 |
| 5. One Louisville \$68,005 | 15. Airbnb, Inc. \$53,347 |
| 6. KY League of Cities, Inc. \$67,130 | 16. KY Automobile Dealers Assn. \$47,942 |
| 7. KY Assn. of Electric Cooperatives, Inc. \$65,818 | 17. KY Primary Care Association \$46,335 |
| 8. Altria Client Services LLC \$64,540 | 18. KY Retail Federation, Inc. \$45,627 |
| 9. Fairness Campaign \$61,372 | 19. American Civil Liberties Union \$42,236 |
| 10. Elevance Health & Affiliates \$60,227 | 20. Humana Inc. \$42,209 |

For a complete list of lobbying spending by all businesses and organizations, and compensation paid to each of the lobbyists, see the Legislative Ethics Commission's website at:

<http://klec.ky.gov/Reports/Pages/Employers-and-Legislative-Agents.aspx>

[Lobbying Report Deadline](#)

Session has finished and we are almost done! One more form due before the quarterly reports start.

Friday, May 15, 2026 is the next reporting deadline for lobbying entities, and all lobbyists and employers are required to file Updated Registration Statements by that date, for the period of **April 1 through April 30, 2026**. This reporting period will be open for filing these reports on May 1, 2026.

The easiest and quickest way for lobbyists and employers to file is to visit the Commission's website <https://apps.klec.ky.gov/lec/onlinefiling.aspx> and file online.

[Newly-Registered and Terminated Lobbying Employers](#)

The following businesses and organizations recently registered to lobby in Kentucky:

All Points Broadband Partners, LLC

Allstate Insurance Company

Avesis

Carfax

CME Group, Inc.

Midea America Corp.

Pace-O-Matic of Kentucky

Shelter Insurance

Weston A. Price Foundation

The following business recently terminated their status in Kentucky:

BlueOval SK

Choose Hope LLC

Clearpath Specialty

Dizpot

Grin Grant Inc.

Liberty Mutual Insurance Group

Roaring Brooke Recovery

[Ethics & Lobbying News from around the U.S.](#)

[NC senator asks for investigation of ties between his colleague and a lobbyist](#)

By: Dan Kane - [MSN.com](#) - March 18, 2026

A state senator has asked the State Board of Elections and the state auditor to look into a colleague's campaign activity as it relates to a powerful lobbyist and his wife.

Sen. Terence Everitt, a Wake County Democrat, wants the elections board to investigate the nearly \$59,000 paid by state Sen. Dave Craven's campaign to a company owned by the wife of lobbyist Kevin Wilkinson for consulting services. The News & Observer last week reported the spending, which appears to be the only campaign work the business has done.

A review of Craven's campaign reports by Bob Hall, the retired executive director of Democracy NC, shows that more than 20% of the money Craven raised in the last election came from people with ties to Wilkinson's clients. Some of the campaign donors have been successful in winning favorable law changes or state appropriations.

“These circumstances raise questions about whether the payments made by the campaign committee (to Megan Wilkinson’s business) were for legitimate campaign services and whether those expenditures were properly reported under North Carolina campaign finance law,” Everitt wrote.

Craven in the N&O report said that Megan Wilkinson is a longtime friend who had done “planning and managing” of campaign events. She, her husband and Craven are UNC Charlotte alums who attended the university at roughly the same time.

But Craven, a Randolph County Republican, did not respond to the N&O’s requests for documentation showing what work Megan Wilkinson’s business was paid for.

Everitt asked the board to request and review that documentation.

“Given the public interest in maintaining confidence in our campaign finance system, I respectfully request that the Board review the relevant campaign finance reports and any supporting documentation necessary to determine whether the payments in question represent legitimate campaign expenditures and whether all reporting requirements under North Carolina law have been satisfied,” he wrote.

The N&O wasn’t able to reach Craven or the Wilkinson’s on Tuesday.

Everitt wants State Auditor Dave Boliek to investigate the billions of dollars lawmakers have handed out in “directed grants” to various government, nonprofit and for-profit entities, some of which are clients of Wilkinson’s.

“Recent public reporting has highlighted the intersection of campaign fundraising, lobbying relationships, and legislative appropriations in North Carolina,” Everitt wrote. “While that reporting may concern particular circumstances, it also raises broader questions about whether the directed grant system provides sufficient transparency and accountability in the allocation of public funds.”

In an interview, Everitt said Republican lawmakers have been directing public money to people with connections and wealthy interests who have the ability to boost their campaigns financially at the expense of everyone else.

“They’ve had other priorities with that money for the last 15 years,” Everitt said. “I mean, we should be investing in ourselves and in our infrastructure and our people and our public schools and our roads and bridges and hospitals.”

Everitt has been a state lawmaker since his election to the House in 2018. He first won election to the Senate in 2024 and is seeking reelection this year. He’s also the executive director of the nonprofit N.C. Voter Protection Alliance, which was formed in June last year. Michael Weisel, an attorney and former Wake County Democratic Party chairman, filed the incorporation papers.

Everitt has been one of the more outspoken Democrats in the legislature and has paid a price for it in both chambers, which Republicans have held with near or outright supermajorities with the help of redistricting. In 2023, then-Speaker Tim Moore, a Cleveland County Republican, moved Everitt’s legislative office into a former supply closet in the basement after Everitt requested an investigation into Moore’s romantic relationship with a state employee who was married at the time.

In November, Everitt received a written rebuke from Senate Rules Committee Chair Bill Rabon for remarks Everitt made during the vote to redistrict the state's 14 congressional seats. President Donald Trump had requested that Republican-controlled states redraw districts to expand GOP control. And North Carolina lawmakers' changes are expected to bump up the Republicans' control from a 10-4 to an 11-3 split.

North Carolina is considered a purple state, with Democrats and Republicans serving in statewide offices, but state lawmakers draw the districts for themselves and U.S. House members.

Ethics Panel Dismisses Complaints Over Lawmakers' Trip to Israel

By: Hannah Bassett - **Seven Days – Vermont's Independent Voice**- April 14, 2026

The House Ethics Panel has dismissed complaints against the five Vermont state representatives who visited Israel last September on a trip sponsored by the Israeli government. The panel concluded that the lawmakers did not violate the state Code of Ethics by participating in the overseas visit.

Jewish Voice for Peace Vermont-New Hampshire condemned the decision and warned it laid the groundwork for future ethics violations. The group released the panel's official notice of closure on Monday, four days after it was issued.

The bipartisan, five-member House Ethics Panel keeps details of ethics complaints confidential, but parties involved in a complaint are allowed to disclose related materials.

Liz Blum, executive director of Jewish Voice for Peace Vermont-New Hampshire, filed complaints in December 2025 against the delegation of five Vermont legislators who traveled to Israel: Reps. Sarah "Sarita" Austin (D-Colchester), Matt Birong (D-Vergennes), Gina Galfetti (R-Barre), Will Greer (D-Bennington) and James Gregoire (R-Fairfield). Blum alleged the representatives violated the state Code of Ethics' gifts provision by improperly accepting free airfare, lodging and meals from the Israeli government for an event whose "chief purpose" was lobbying.

The lawmakers were among 250 state legislators from across the U.S. who participated in a conference organized by Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs called "50 States, One Israel" that ran September 15 to 18. The total expenses for each participant were approximately \$6,500, paid for by the Israeli government.

Blum also alleged the representatives violated a separate ethics provision requiring public servants to avoid the appearance of unethical conduct, arguing that the breach arose from accepting gifts tied to pro-Israel lobbying and a pending state bill on antisemitism.

The filing included select excerpts from remarks by Israeli officials to conference participants, including a call to action from Israel's Foreign Affairs Minister Gideon Sa'ar. "There are still some States without BDS laws," he said. "We call on you: ensure your home states have laws to protect Israel and Jews against this modern antisemitism."

The lawmakers' trip to Israel generated significant public response and sharp criticism after the delegation returned to Vermont. The conference occurred as Israel's military launched a new ground incursion into Gaza City and all three members of Vermont's federal delegation referred to the campaign in Gaza as genocide for the first time.

News of the trip initially spread after the foreign ministry shared a photograph on social media of the representatives posing at a ceremonial tree planting in southern Israel. Lawmakers were not required to disclose details about the trip because Vermont currently exempts gifts received in an official legislative capacity from such reporting requirements.

The five representatives filed a joint response on February 12 requesting the panel close the complaints. The lawmakers said the trip qualified as official travel to a widely attended event offering educational, training, cultural and political programming.

“It is unclear how the Complainant, who did not participate in the event and appears only to have read promotional materials and subsequent media coverage about it, would be familiar with the event’s “chief purpose,” but we can assure the Panel that there was much more to this trip than lobbying or propaganda,” the lawmakers wrote in their response. “It was a blend of cultural education, historical appreciation, and bipartisan engagement.”

“The question for the House Ethics Panel is not whether other colleagues would have opted to participate in the ‘50 States, One Israel’ event if invited or whether our trip sent the ‘right’ message about our views on the situation in Israel,” their response concluded. “The question is whether our participation violated the Code of Ethics, the House Rules, or the Vermont Constitution, and the answer to that question is clearly no.”

In its decision, the bipartisan House Ethics Panel agreed with the lawmakers, finding that “there are no reasonable grounds to believe that an ethical violation occurred.”

The ethics panel determined that the trip fell within the state Code of Ethics’ gift provisions allowing lawmakers to accept free admission to widely attended events. It agreed with the representatives that the gathering — attended by roughly 250 bipartisan legislators — qualified as a cultural, political and civic event and that conference participants were acting in their official capacity. The panel also found that the Israeli government was the primary sponsor, with lawmakers’ travel, lodging, meals and related expenses reasonable and permissible under the ethics code’s definition of allowable gifts.

Additionally, the panel concluded that the comments reportedly made by the foreign affairs minister at the event, after the legislators were already there, were outside of the lawmakers’ control and could not “retroactively convert this trip into an unethical, impermissible one.”

In a press release on Monday, Blum denounced the panel’s decision and said it showed “willful blindness to the fact that the lobbying for legislation that the Vermont legislators received as part of the junket was foreseeable.”

“This House Ethics Panel decision is shameful,” Blum said in a statement. “It grants no credit to the five House members who took the improper gifts, and it discredits the Ethics Panel itself. The Panel turned a statutory safeguard into a roadmap for abuse.”

Blum warned that the decision created a “dangerous loophole” that could allow foreign governments to offer travel perks as gifts to U.S. lawmakers, as long as lobbying is not explicitly stated in an invitation.

Galfetti, a conference participant, said on Monday that she was grateful for the panel's work and glad the complaints had been dismissed but added that the legislature should adopt clearer safeguards to guard against perceived conflicts of interest.

"We could use more guidelines in respect to these kinds of trips, so transparency is above and beyond what we need," she said.

This session, Galfetti and Greer, another participant, sponsored legislation to expand travel disclosure requirements for public servants, including lawmakers. The bill did not advance out of committee, though Galfetti said she hopes its provisions could be folded into other legislation before the end of the biennium.

In its decision, the House Ethics Panel said that while the delegation had not violated the state ethics code, more guidance on applying gift provisions would help lawmakers evaluate whether benefits are permissible and said it was "committed to working with the Commission on developing such guidelines."

Christina Sivret, executive director of the Vermont State Ethics Commission, said on Tuesday that the panel had not contacted the commission about any such effort. She noted that developing additional guidance would require more staffing for the commission, which is set by the legislature.

In the absence of new guidelines, she added, lawmakers can always seek guidance from the commission and attend ethics trainings.

Sivret said the legislature requested an ethics training on gifts last year but did not provide enough notice to schedule it; this year, she said, no training was requested.