



# News Release

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## ‘Austin’s Oldest Profession’ Grows Older and Fatter

### Spending By Texas Lobby Clients Leapt 33 Percent From 1995-2001

**Austin, TX:** Lobby spending in Texas—which is second only to California in the number of clients who hire state government lobbyists—rose 33 percent from 1995 through 2001, a new study found. During this seven-year period, special interests spent a total of up to \$1.3 billion to lobby Texas officials, including a record of up to \$230 million in 2001—the year of the most recent legislative session (Texas lobbyists report contract income in ranges such as “\$50,000 to \$99,999”).

The report, [\*Austin’s Oldest Profession: Texas’ Top Lobby Clients and Those Who Service Them\*](#), found that Texas’ skyrocketing lobby expenditures were not driven by an increase in the number of clients who pay hired guns to influence government officials. Even as lobby spending increased up to \$35 million over the previous legislative year, the number of lobbyists, lobby contracts and lobby clients stayed relatively constant.

“Austin has 50 lobbyists for every Senator and 10 lobbyists for every House Member,” said Texans for Public Justice Director Craig McDonald. “This hired-gun army hustles tax breaks and other favors for abusive corporations like Enron and WorldCom and polluters like Exxon and Alcoa. Of Texas’ 1,600 lobbyists, just 10 worked for consumer groups and just 29 worked to promote environmental protection. The corporate lobby goes virtually unchallenged in Texas.”

Although lobby clients spent up to \$230 million on 6,391 paid lobby contracts in 2001, labor, environmental and consumer interests accounted for just 2 percent of these contracts and expenditures.

*Austin’s Oldest Profession’s* other key findings about the 2001 lobby include:

- The 14 clients that reported up to \$1 million apiece in lobby contracts accounted for 11 percent of all lobby expenditures. SBC Corp. led the pack, spending up to \$7 million on its 96 lobbyists.
- Interests in the Energy & Natural Resources sector spent the most lobby money, paying up to \$36 million for 811 lobby contracts—a ratio of 4.5 contracts for each legislator.
- The 38 lobbyists who reported maximum incomes of more than \$1 million apiece collectively reported 1,050 contracts that brought in up to \$52 million. These elite lobbyists pocketed one in four Texas lobby dollars.

- Shattering the glass ceiling, Baker Botts lobbyist Pam Giblin is the only hired gun to clear a maximum of more than \$2 million. She is an ex-environmental regulator who represents polluters.
- Lobbyists reported 17 mega-contracts worth “more than \$200,000.” Giblin reported the only such contract with a public entity. The Brownsville Public Utility Board has spent months dodging Public Information Act requests concerning the nature and value of this mega-contract.

Access *Austin’s Oldest Profession* at <http://www.tpj.org/reports/lobby02/lobby02.pdf>

***Texans for Public Justice is a non-profit, non-partisan research organization  
that tracks the role of money in Texas politics.***

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