

Public Finance and Litigation Alert: Legislature Passes Bill Delaying Implementation Date of Lobbying Law

9/30/2009

On September 29, 2009, the day the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was to begin enforcement of the new Lobbying Law, the Legislature enacted legislation delaying the effective date, and the bill awaits Governor Deval Patrick's signature. If Governor Patrick does not sign or veto the legislation it will automatically become law within ten days of its passage yesterday. The new effective date will be January 1, 2010, which coincides with the beginning of the next six-month reporting period for lobbyists, lobbyist entities, and clients. Legislators agreed with outside observers that changing the effective date to January 1, 2010 would coincide better with the law's reporting requirements. The delay will provide non-profits and other entities additional time to develop and implement the required compliance programs and register, if necessary, with the Secretary of the Commonwealth's office. It will also enable the Secretary's office to develop better training tools for the new law. For a detailed description of the bill, see our [July 2, 2009](#) advisory.

The bill changing the effective date was itself made effective as of September 28, 2009, to avoid any unintentional noncompliance with the new law.

Mintz Levin's Government Practice Group has been working with clients to analyze current practices to determine if lobbyist registration is necessary, and thereafter on compliance with lobbying law reporting and disclosure programs. We can help conduct risk assessments, complete disclosure reporting, develop or review your lobbying policies (including employee training, internal ethics and compliance audits), and draft advisory opinion requests.

For assistance in this area, please contact one of the attorneys listed below or any member of your Mintz Levin client service team.

John R. Regier
(617) 348-1720
JRRegier@mintz.com

Elissa Flynn-Poppey
(617) 348-1868
EFlynn-Poppey@mintz.com

George K. Atanasov
(617) 348-4722
GAtanasov@mintz.com