



Minnesota
State Bar
Association

600 Nicollet Mall
Suite 380
Minneapolis, MN 55402

December 3, 2024

Minnesota Campaign Finance & Public Disclosure Board
190 Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Draft Report to the Legislature on Lobbying Political Subdivisions

Board Members:

The Minnesota State Bar Association (MSBA) is a voluntary professional organization that represents over 12,000 lawyers throughout the state. The MSBA appreciates the CFB's extensive efforts to study lobbyist registration requirements and the MSBA's proposal for a quasi-judicial exemption.

The Board's draft report to the legislature includes a recommendation that, if a quasi-judicial exception is created, it should apply only to participating in public hearings of decision-making bodies but not extend to private meetings with local officials. If such a recommendation were adopted, we have two suggestions to add clarity.

First, it should be made clear that the quasi-judicial exception covers written comments entered into the public record. Typically, significant time is spent preparing materials entered into the public record, and this time does not involve private communications with decision-makers.

Second, with respect to private meetings, we believe that a quasi-judicial exemption should clearly apply if the meeting is not with a decision-maker. Frequently, there are meetings with staff that are focused on processes and how to conform proposals to ordinances. In other words, those meetings involve information-gathering, not advocacy, and therefore should not be considered lobbying.

We appreciate the Board's consideration of these clarifying suggestions, and we would be happy to answer questions or provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bryan Lake", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Bryan Lake
MSBA lobbyist