



**Reinvent Albany Testimony to
Council Committee on Governmental Operations**

Oversight Hearing on NYC Lobbying

RE: Enact 3-Year Revolving Door Ban, Improve Lobby Filings and Open Data

April 19, 2024

Good morning Chair Restler and members of the Committee on Governmental Operations. My name is Rachael Fauss, and I am the Senior Policy Advisor for Reinvent Albany. Reinvent Albany advocates for transparent and accountable government in New York State and City. Thank you for holding this hearing today.

First, we support the intent of the three bills you are considering today to reduce the undue influence of deep-pocketed political interests and slow the “revolving door” of city government employees lobbying their former employer – the City of New York.

However, we strongly urge the City Council to aim much higher. At a minimum, New York City should have a three-year lobbying revolving door ban. Florida has a [six-year ban](#) that was passed by public referendum in 2018. Six year ban. Surely, New York City can pass a ban half as long as Florida’s.

New York needs you to renew your oversight of lobbying activity, which is exploding. We urge you to please:

1. **Ensure the City Clerk finally implements the 2013 change allowing smaller lobbying clients to file twice yearly**, instead of six times. It has been 11 years since the Council adopted this modest change. By our count, there were about 140 small lobbyists active from 2018-2022 that did not hire outside lobbyists and spent less than \$10,000 a year.
2. **Ensure the City Clerk meets its pledge to publish lobbyists’ fundraising and political consulting reports as open data** by the end of 2024.

3. **Pass a bill requiring lobbyists to report whether they are supporting or opposing bills** or NYC government actions, as is done in Montana, and which specific sections of budget bills are being targeted, as is done in Idaho ([see the National Conference of State Legislatures' analysis here](#)).

Now specifically on the legislation on today's agenda, we have the following comments:

1. **[Intro 76-2024 \(Restler\)](#), Post-employment activities of former elected officials.** This bill would bar former elected officials from lobbying any city agency for two years after termination from city service. We note that the bill removes the current two-year restriction for certain high-ranking officials. Therefore, this legislation must be passed together with Intro 77 of 2024 (below), or be combined as an omnibus bill to ensure that all current restrictions continue, or are expanded.
 - Given the large amount of direct knowledge and connections former elected officials have that can directly benefit private interests, **we support extending this prohibition to three years.**
2. **[Intro 77-2024 \(Restler\)](#), Post-employment activities of certain former public servants.** Under this bill, former agency heads and high-level employees of the Mayor's Office, the City Council, or the Law Department would be barred from lobbying any city agency for two years. High-level staffers, including policymakers at other agencies, boards, and commissions, as well as paid board members, would be prohibited from lobbying any city agency up to one year after they leave city service, and would be prohibited from lobbying their former agency for a total of two years.
 - As with the first bill, **we support a three-year ban for these individuals lobbying any city agencies – not just the agency where they left service.**
3. **[Intro 742-2024 \(Brewer\)](#), Lobbying prohibitions in connection with campaign-related fundraising or political consulting.** This bill would prohibit a person or organization who has engaged in fundraising or political consulting for certain candidates for city office from lobbying the elected candidate for a period of one year, if the person was elected within two years after the occurrence of the fundraising or political consulting. The Campaign Finance Board would be required to develop notices to disseminate through print and electronic media that notify campaign-related fundraisers and political consultants of this lobbying prohibition. Any person that knowingly and willingly violates the prohibition would be subject to civil penalties, and second and subsequent violations would constitute a Class A misdemeanor.

- Again, **we urge the Council to extend the prohibition period for political consultants and fundraisers to three years**, rather than one year, and to also **expand this prohibition beyond just the former candidate to at least executive staff, i.e. staff of the Mayor’s Office, or a City Councilmember’s staff, and department heads appointed by the Mayor**. Former campaign staffers of mayoral candidates frequently serve as high-ranking officials in the administration, who have deep connections with former campaign consultants. For mayoral candidates, staff members or department heads could be lobbied instead, who would simply relay the request.

Regarding NYC’s lobbying laws and their implementation, we have concerns in a number of areas, and encourage the Council to either monitor implementation, or introduce new legislation in the following areas:

1. **Fix City Clerk’s failure to implement twice-yearly reporting for small lobby spenders.** In 2013, the City Council [passed legislation](#) implementing the recommendations of the Lobbying Commission, which included that for organizations that do not hire outside lobbyists and only spend between \$5,000 and \$10,000, that they only need to file two reports a year, instead of six. **It is astounding that more than a decade later, this provision has still not been implemented.**
 - We strongly urge the City Council to work with the City Clerk’s office to implement this provision of the law reducing the filing burden for smaller lobbyists. Even if it requires additional resources to update the eLobbyist filing system to accommodate this change, it could be a boon to all filers if additional improvements are made to the lobbying filing system.
 - According to our review of the [City Clerk’s filing data](#), it appears that from 2018-2022, there were approximately 140 filers that spent an average of \$10,000 or less, and did not pay outside lobbyists for any services. These include a number of well-known NYC nonprofits and institutions, a sampling of which is below (full list provided as an appendix to this testimony).
 - The Bronx Defenders
 - Community Service Society of New York
 - Habitat For Humanity New York City, Inc.
 - The New York Botanical Garden
 - Queens Borough Public Library
 - New York Civil Liberties Union

2. **Fix City Clerk’s sadly lagging effort to publish open data.** We appreciated [seeing](#) eLobbyist data published as open data by the City Clerk in 2019, which was the result of years of advocacy by watchdog groups. Unfortunately, this is the only City Clerk’s office dataset published on the city’s open data portal.
 - However, the Office of Technology and Innovation’s [2023 Open Data Plan](#) lists the City Clerk’s Lobbyists’ Fundraising and Political Consulting data as [scheduled for future publication](#) by 12/31/2024. This dataset was put on this list because it has been FOILED by the public, thanks to the City Council’s Local Law 7 of 2016 that requires FOIL requests be used to determine new datasets for open data publication. **We ask the Council to ensure that the Lobbyists’ Fundraising and Political Consultant dataset is published in 2024, as promised.**

3. **Pass bill reporting of support or opposition to bills or other NYC determinations.** New York State and City lobbying laws do not currently require lobbyists to report whether their activity is in support or opposition to a bill, budget, or other governmental action. Additionally, reporting on budget lobbying is not required to list specific sections or appropriations. This lack of information greatly lessens the usefulness of lobbying disclosures. We ask the Council to introduce legislation requiring reporting of whether lobbyists support or oppose specific bills, budgets, and other city government actions. Other jurisdictions require this reporting. The specific position taken is required in Montana, and Idaho requires the specific section be reported for appropriations bills (see the [NCSL list](#) of lobby reporting requirements.)

Appendix: List of NYC Lobbying Clients that Spent Less than \$10,000 and Did Not Hire
Outside Lobbyists, 2018-2022

Reinvent Albany Analysis: NYC Lobbying Clients Spending Less than \$10,000 on Average and Not Hiring Outside Lobbyists, 2018-2022 (data linked here)						
Client Name	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Grand Total, 2018-22
AB CarVal Investors, L.P.					\$140	\$140
Actis GP LLP		\$465				\$465
Aermont Capital LLP on behalf of Aermont Capital LLP and Aermont Capital Management S.A.R.L.	\$159					\$159
AllianceBernstein LP	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$12,000
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Inc		\$9,442	\$3,275	\$4,726		\$17,443
American Heart Association, Inc.	\$1,542	\$5,890				\$7,432
American Prison Data Systems, PBC	\$5,383	\$2,739	\$2,034	\$832	\$1,437	\$12,425
APICHA Community Health Center	\$440	\$537		\$701	\$291	\$1,969
Apple Inc.	\$6,864	\$4,738	\$636			\$12,238
Barclays Capital, Inc.	\$78	\$140				\$218
BC Partners Advisors L.P.	\$5,292	\$5,292	\$4,460			\$15,044
Brigade Capital Management, LP	\$1,050	\$50	\$100			\$1,200
Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy, Inc.	\$248					\$248
Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation		\$46			\$192	\$238
CarVal Investors, L.P.				\$732	\$355	\$1,087
Carval Investors, LLC	\$105	\$23	\$58			\$186
Catholic Charities Community Services, Archdiocese of New York			\$1,083			\$1,083
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York			\$161			\$161
Catholic Community Relations Council of New York, Inc.	\$282	\$254	\$191	\$60	\$50	\$837
Catholic Guardian Services					\$195	\$195
Center For Employment Opportunities, Inc		\$25	\$105		\$2,821	\$2,951
Charter Communications Operating, LLC			\$3,291	\$2,015	\$2,269	\$7,575
Cheyne Capital US, LP	\$230	\$163				\$393
Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc.		\$3,331	\$400			\$3,731

**Reinvent Albany Analysis:
NYC Lobbying Clients Spending Less than \$10,000 on Average and
Not Hiring Outside Lobbyists, 2018-2022 (data linked [here](#))**

Client Name	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Grand Total, 2018-22
Citizens Union of the City of New York	\$1,878	\$1,668	\$1,094	\$1,792	\$2,558	\$8,991
Coalition for the Homeless, Inc.	\$3,634	\$13,022	\$3,354	\$8,909	\$5,253	\$34,172
Coller Capital LTD	\$59					\$59
Community Food Advocates, Inc.		\$258			\$222	\$480
Community Service Society of New York	\$1,780	\$508	\$611	\$483	\$376	\$3,758
Comvest Advisors, LLC	\$192	\$89	\$170			\$451
Crow Holdings Capital Partners, L.L.C.	\$280					\$280
CSC Holdings LLC		\$38				\$38
Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation, Inc.		\$361				\$361
District Council 37	\$500	\$500	\$400	\$525	\$450	\$2,375
Earthjustice					\$7,065	\$7,065
EQT Partners Inc.	\$4,458	\$1,513	\$5,385	\$34		\$11,390
Equity Advocates, Inc.			\$5	\$11		\$16
FedEx Corporation					\$511	\$511
Food Bank For New York City	\$262	\$665				\$927
Food Industry Alliance of New York State, Inc.	\$315	\$219	\$117	\$148	\$133	\$931
Friends of the Upper East Side Historic District, Inc.				\$591		\$591
Ghost Management Group, LLC				\$6,500	\$25,465	\$31,965
God's Love-We Deliver, Inc.		\$5				\$5
Goldman Sachs Asset Management, L.P.	\$148				\$54	\$202
Graham Windham		\$146	\$213	\$124		\$483
Greater New York LECET Fund	\$3,750	\$4,840	\$840			\$9,430
Habitat For Humanity New York City, Inc.			\$1,980			\$1,980
Housing Conservation Coordinators, Inc.	\$1,605	\$2,252	\$354			\$4,211
HSBC Bank USA, NA	\$38					\$38
Integrum Holdings LP				\$1,275	\$600	\$1,875
Island Investment Management LLC				\$50		\$50
J.P. Morgan Securities LLC	\$915					\$915
Jewish Association for Services for the Aged	\$15					\$15

**Reinvent Albany Analysis:
NYC Lobbying Clients Spending Less than \$10,000 on Average and
Not Hiring Outside Lobbyists, 2018-2022 (data linked [here](#))**

Client Name	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Grand Total, 2018-22
Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, Inc.	\$119					\$119
Jewish Child Care Association of New York			\$420			\$420
Jewish Community Council of Greater Coney Island, Inc.		\$310		\$1	\$299	\$610
Jews for Racial and Economic Justice	\$62					\$62
Justice Committee, Inc.				\$47		\$47
Legal Services NYC	\$1,058	\$903	\$332	\$59	\$487	\$2,838
Lenox Hill Neighborhood House		\$1,610	\$149	\$43		\$1,802
Leonard Green & Partners, L.P.		\$104				\$104
Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.	\$72	\$195			\$99	\$366
LIVEON NY	\$1,114	\$1,010				\$2,124
Long Island Board of Realtors, Inc			\$81			\$81
Long Island University			\$189			\$189
Make the Road New York	\$1,765	\$1,899	\$611	\$2,258	\$4,046	\$10,579
Maplebear, Inc.				\$5,700	\$3,961	\$9,660
Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty				\$4,605		\$4,605
MGM Resorts International Operations, Inc.				\$190		\$190
Monarch Alternative Capital LP		\$38				\$38
Museum of the City of New York, Inc.		\$581	\$322			\$903
National Institute For Reproductive Health Action Fund, Inc.		\$360				\$360
National Restaurant Association	\$1,771		\$28,500	\$12,500		\$42,771
National Waste & Recycling Association	\$625					\$625
Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc.	\$4,335		\$20			\$4,355
New Economy Project, Inc.		\$836	\$290	\$113	\$14	\$1,253
New York Association of Convenience Stores, Inc.		\$88				\$88
New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault, Inc.					\$3,337	\$3,337
New York City Community Learning Schools Initiative Inc	\$459	\$750				\$1,209

**Reinvent Albany Analysis:
 NYC Lobbying Clients Spending Less than \$10,000 on Average and
 Not Hiring Outside Lobbyists, 2018-2022 (data linked [here](#))**

Client Name	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Grand Total, 2018-22
New York City Educational Construction Fund	\$28					\$28
New York Civil Liberties Union, Inc.	\$600	\$600	\$600	\$600	\$600	\$3,000
New York Common Pantry, Inc.					\$285	\$285
New York Communities For Change, Inc.	\$2,552	\$1,055	\$1,460	\$8,403	\$2,890	\$16,359
New York Farm Bureau, Inc.					\$692	\$692
New York Restoration Project (NYRP)				\$6,000		\$6,000
New York Road Runners, Inc.	\$17					\$17
New York State Laborers-Employers Cooperation and Education Trust		\$301		\$3,260		\$3,561
New York State Vapor Association, Inc.		\$5,433	\$11,750			\$17,183
Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York, Inc.		\$55				\$55
Nonprofit New York			\$1,109	\$36	\$358	\$1,503
Nordic Capital X Limited on behalf of Nordic Capital X, L.P.			\$450			\$450
Nordic Capital XI Limited on behalf of Nordic Capital XI, L.P.				\$425	\$625	\$1,050
North Star Fund Inc. for the benefit of Communities United for Police Reform					\$1,766	\$1,766
NYC NOWC, INC.		\$141	\$1,536	\$1,238	\$59	\$2,974
OpenPlans, Inc.					\$2,120	\$2,120
P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, Inc.				\$278		\$278
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Inc.	\$56	\$855	\$1		\$1,130	\$2,042
Phipps Houses	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$750
PIMCO LLC	\$149	\$1,370	\$969	\$338		\$2,827
Planned Parenthood of Greater New York, Inc.				\$436		\$436
Planned Parenthood Of New York City, Inc.		\$14				\$14
Primary Care Development Corporation	\$150	\$169	\$171	\$177	\$174	\$841
Professional Staff Congress/CUNY, AFT Local 2334					\$4,500	\$4,500
Prospect Park Alliance, Inc.	\$6,600					\$6,600

**Reinvent Albany Analysis:
NYC Lobbying Clients Spending Less than \$10,000 on Average and
Not Hiring Outside Lobbyists, 2018-2022 (data linked [here](#))**

Client Name	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Grand Total, 2018-22
Providence Strategic Growth Capital Partners L.L.C.				\$183		\$183
Queens Community House, Inc.					\$54	\$54
Reclaim New York Initiative, Inc.	\$1,849					\$1,849
Reinvent Albany					\$54	\$54
Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union	\$98					\$98
Rudin Management Company, Inc.	\$394	\$386	\$21			\$801
SAS Institute Inc.				\$2,665	\$1,570	\$4,235
Schroder Investment Management North America Inc		\$380				\$380
Selfhelp Community Services, Inc.			\$465	\$247		\$712
Skinny Labs Inc.		\$185				\$185
Supportive Housing Network of New York, Inc.		\$4,713	\$3,444	\$8,084	\$3,542	\$19,783
TCG Securities, L.L.C.	\$355					\$355
The Alliance for a Greater New York, Inc.	\$221					\$221
The Bronx Defenders					\$232	\$232
The Carnegie Hall Corporation				\$693	\$350	\$1,043
The Historic Districts Council Inc.	\$250					\$250
The Museum of Modern Art	\$4,698	\$15,876	\$5,000		\$14,855	\$40,429
The New York Botanical Garden	\$4,170	\$4,170	\$3,475	\$4,170	\$4,170	\$20,155
The Partnership for New York City, Inc.	\$727	\$2,024	\$969	\$784	\$1,328	\$5,832
The Partnership for the Homeless, Inc.				\$100		\$100
The Queens Borough Public Library	\$9,717	\$5,947	\$9,912	\$10,113	\$10,618	\$46,306
Theatre of the Oppressed NYC, Inc.	\$2,423	\$750				\$3,173
Thoma Bravo, LLC	\$231					\$231
Tides Advocacy		\$96				\$96
Torchlight Investors, LLC					\$40	\$40
Uber Technologies, Inc. on behalf of Social Bicycles LLC		\$4,021				\$4,021
United Neighborhood Houses of New York, Inc.	\$12,904	\$7,306				\$20,211

**Reinvent Albany Analysis:
 NYC Lobbying Clients Spending Less than \$10,000 on Average and
 Not Hiring Outside Lobbyists, 2018-2022 (data linked [here](#))**

Client Name	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Grand Total, 2018-22
Varde Partners, Inc.	\$238	\$222	\$210	\$252	\$244	\$1,167
Visiting Nurse Service of New York		\$1,763	\$603		\$10,400	\$12,766
Vista Equity Partners Management, LLC	\$1,478			\$5,491	\$27,252	\$34,221
West Harlem Environmental Action, Inc.				\$1,385		\$1,385
Westbeth Corp. Housing Development Fund Co, Inc.				\$2,876	\$276	\$3,151
White Oak Global Advisors, LLC	\$48					\$48
Wildlife Conservation Society	\$16,702	\$4,534	\$7,656	\$5,319	\$7,593	\$41,804
Yaffed, Inc.		\$170				\$170
Zagster, Inc.	\$91					\$91