

2018 Nebraska Lobby Report

Another Record



Nebraska

Holding Power Accountable

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2018 Nebraska Lobby Report

Another record year for the lobby, **\$17,446,838!** While the Governor is slashing agency budgets and legislative salaries remain frozen at \$12,000, the lobby continues to make big bucks. When legislators see lobbying firms grossing as much as \$1.5 million it is difficult to blame them for pushing through the revolving door when their terms are up

Our Unicameral, however, was not meant to be a graduate school for would-be lobbyists. The public provides elected officials with the opportunity to serve the public not special interests. The knowledge gained through service and the friendships with colleagues is a public trust not to be bought and sold.

In 2017 a record number of paid lobbyists, 377, worked our state government for a wide range of interests. Some would argue, “surely that number of lobbyists would represent every public concern.” But that is not necessarily the case. Most professional lobbying firms work for those who can pay. It is the nature of the business.

In Nebraska, the lobbyist’s tools appear unlimited. Not only can the lobbyist wine, dine, and entertain but they can donate to political campaigns, host campaign fundraisers, and solicit campaign funds from their clients. With that tool kit the lobbyist can open nearly any door.

This report reviews the dollars and cents behind the lobby’s 2017 efforts.



Jack Gould

CCNE Issues Chair

(m) 402-310-8525 | (h) 402-784-6461

jackgould84@gmail.com

5-Year Lobby Spending Summary

2017

\$17,446,838

2016

\$16,754,684

2015

\$15,645,795

2014

\$14,073,840

2013

\$13,816,694

Lobby Expenses

Some lobbyists charge a flat rate for their services. Others charge a base fee and then are reimbursed for entertainment and meals. The best place to look for total expenses is the final report filed by the people who pay the bill, the principals.

The chart below shows itemized lobbying expenses from 2013 through 2017. You will quickly see the large increase over the last five years in Lobbyist Compensation and Entertainment.

| | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Lobbyist Compensation | 12,833,019 | 13,130,160 | 14,506,302 | 15,743,320 | 16,188,266 |
| Lobbyist Reimbursement | 275,760 | 252,163 | 442,365 | 282,023 | 334,074 |
| Entertainment | 272,639 | 263,260 | 370,702 | 446,750 | 467,030 |
| Miscellaneous | 181,998 | 211,499 | 218,853 | 137,824 | 214,512 |
| Office Supplies | 170,620 | 160,495 | 33,180 | 47,338 | 74,844 |
| Gifts & Tickets | 28,369 | 23,992 | 25,784 | 25,558 | 26,332 |
| Travel | 44,930 | 19,014 | 41,759 | 46,012 | 41,503 |
| Lodging | 9,356 | 11,973 | 6,345 | 25,856 | 7,515 |
| Total Expense | 13,816,691 | 14,072,556 | 15,645,290 | 16,754,681 | 17,354,076 |

2017 statistics recorded on 2/09/17

Late filings may make minor changes in the statistics and could increase the numbers.

Nebraska's Active Lobbyists

The chart below shows the number of registered lobbyists and principals tabulated by the Clerk of the Legislature's office from 2013 through 2017. The term "Principal" identifies all entities that pay for lobbyists. The number of compensated lobbyists reached an all time high in 2017.

| Registered | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Compensated Lobbyists | 321 | 316 | 351 | 364 | 377 |
| Volunteer Lobbyists | 38 | 39 | 42 | 33 | 41 |
| Principals | 506 | 506 | 545 | 543 | 550 |
| Volunteer Organizations | 23 | 27 | 36 | 33 | 36 |

Statistics recorded on 2/7/17

Who Spends the Most on Lobbying?

Lobbyists don't come cheap! For many special interests, hiring a lobbyist is much like hiring a top executive or maybe two. Below we have identified 10 of the top spenders (principals).

The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce spent the most in 2016 and 2017 but the League of Municipalities captured the five-year total for the second time.

| Principal | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 5 Year Total |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| League of Municipalities | \$193,131 | \$179,551 | \$194,024 | \$173,563 | \$184,832 | \$925,101 |
| NE Chamber of Commerce | 151,377 | 120,036 | 162,162 | 218,338 | 242,198 | 894,111 |
| Altria Client Services | 209,655 | 158,402 | 134,626 | 207,059 | 160,040 | 869,782 |
| University of Nebraska | 156,634 | 160,135 | 165,671 | 150,142 | 141,902 | 774,484 |
| NE Banker's Association | 124,535 | 141,668 | 205,470 | 106,459 | 147,330 | 725,462 |
| Renewable Fuels NE | 191,475 | 190,191 | 188,461 | 48,597 | 50,885 | 669,609 |
| NE Council of School Adm. | 92,295 | 104,713 | 127,889 | 108,381 | 130,891 | 564,169 |
| NE State Education Association | 103,050 | 68,645 | 102,361 | 93,879 | 122,656 | 490,591 |
| Omaha Public Power | 83,544 | 90,050 | 86,682 | 86,095 | 87,341 | 433,712 |
| NE State Bar Association | 92,388 | 74,841 | 74,410 | 72,705 | 75,094 | 389,438 |

Statistics recorded on 2/7/17

Who Makes the Most?

The numbers speak for themselves!

| Firm | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | Total |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Mueller/Robak | 1,273,952 | 1,425,318 | 1,438,822 | 1,517,837 | 1,466,039 | 7,121,968 |
| Radcliffe/Assoc | 1,025,960 | 1,116,530 | 1,213,919 | 1,257,776 | 1,164,984 | 5,779,169 |
| O'Hara/Lindsay | 873,348 | 909,514 | 979,728 | 1,053,596 | 917,730 | 4,733,916 |
| Peetz/Co. | 513,000 | 514,500 | 643,100 | 695,948 | 688,067 | 3,054,615 |
| Am. Comms. | 592,350 | 618,221 | 607,115 | 596,430 | 628,423 | 3,042,539 |
| Nowka/Edwards | 552,308 | 557,101 | 573,324 | 626,309 | 644,703 | 2,953,745 |
| Kissel/E+S | 611,519 | 534,076 | 630,208 | 483,668 | 645,138 | 2,904,609 |
| Husch/Blackwell | 237,552 | 330,102 | 414,689 | 551,452 | 537,127 | 2,070,922 |
| Jensen/Rogert | 382,477 | 340,489 | 366,997 | 338,009 | 365,524 | 1,793,496 |
| Brandt/Assoc. | 240,743 | 253,992 | 361,199 | 271,121 | 252,564 | 1,379,619 |

Statistics recorded 2/09/18

Public Education Lobbying

Many public entities spend tax dollars to get more tax dollars.

Nebraska's Public School Funding Formula has remained a mystery to taxpayers and administrators alike. The only sure thing about the formula is the likelihood that it will be changed. The formula has never been fully funded.

The lobby is one tool school districts can use to monitor the changes and protect their interests. Those school districts that have the funds to invest in lobbying exert greater influence, while those districts lacking in wealth find themselves on the outside looking in. The lobby does not work for all the children only those children in the districts that can pay.

The following chart identifies the 17 school districts and the Learning Community that have hired lobbyists. Over the last 5 years, Omaha Public Schools has spent the most, followed by Millard in second place and Lincoln in third.

| School District | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 5 yr. total | |
|------------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------|--|
| Adams central | \$11,117 | \$8,070 | \$5,200 | \$5,200 | \$5,200 | \$34,787 | |
| Bellevue | 60,200 | 60,200 | 58,400 | 54,200 | 54,200 | 287,200 | |
| Bennington | 32,300 | 7,700 | 18,200 | 9,200 | 4,700 | 72,100 | |
| Columbus | 11,250 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11,250 | 2014 saw the most spent on lobbying in a single year. |
| DC West | 0 | 25,200 | 10,200 | 20,232 | 12,500 | 68,132 | |
| Elkhorn | 18,950 | 25,200 | 25,200 | 25,200 | 21,200 | 115,750 | |
| Fremont | 20,000 | 20,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 40,000 | |
| GrandIslandNW | 11,079 | 8,070 | 5,200 | 5,200 | 5,400 | 34,949 | |
| Grand Island | 30,000 | 30,000 | 30,000 | 30,750 | 31,519 | 152,269 | |
| Lakeview | 6,080 | 8,174 | 5,000 | 5,200 | 5,200 | 29,654 | |
| Lincoln | 45,086 | 42,706 | 40,000 | 41,655 | 38,281 | 207,728 | |
| Millard | 66,079 | 59,823 | 62,280 | 62,206 | 67,368 | 317,756 | |
| Omaha | 67,091 | 78,886 | 67,125 | 78,338 | 72,394 | 363,834 | \$2,399,081 is the most spent collectively in a 5-year period. |
| Papillion | 27,200 | 36,200 | 36,200 | 36,200 | 35,700 | 171,500 | |
| Ralston | 28,416 | 32,476 | 30,093 | 41,328 | 38,474 | 170,787 | |
| SpringfieldPlatt | 10,769 | 20,100 | 10,000 | 20,232 | 27,700 | 88,801 | |
| Westside | 31,418 | 29,832 | 19,666 | 0 | 20,002 | 100,918 | |
| Learning Com. | 24,248 | 26,527 | 26,994 | 26,964 | 26,933 | 131,666 | |
| Total | 501,283 | 519,164 | 449,758 | 462,105 | 402671 | 2,399,081 | |

Statistics for 2016 recorded 2/19/17

The numbers are not staggering, but those districts that have their own lobbyist must believe they have an advantage or they wouldn't spend the money. What about the 269 school districts that can't afford a lobbyist? Are they at a serious disadvantage?

University Lobbying

The University of Nebraska is also competing for education tax dollars. It had six in-house registered lobbyists battling for funds as well as hiring Peetz and Company to back them up. In 2017 the University lobbying team spent \$38,887.62 on entertaining state officials and \$12,874.95 on providing tickets to events. The grand total came to \$51,762.41.

The public school funding formula has never been fully funded.

It doesn't look good for those Class 3 school districts asking for more state aid. Season tickets to the high school football games can't compete with tickets to Memorial Stadium.

Tracking the Money

How difficult is it to follow the entertainment dollars? It is almost as if the lobby wrote the rules. For example, lobbyists are restricted to gifts of \$50 per month, per senator. Senators must report only gifts valued over \$100. Gifts of food and beverages are excluded from reporting except as they contribute to the total entertainment figures for both the lobbyist and the principal.

In other words, it is nearly impossible to find out how much any lobbyist spent entertaining an individual senator. From the other perspective, senators have no idea how much is being spent on their colleagues.

The system seems to be working well at the legislature, but it remains a mystery for the public.

University Gifts

The University of Nebraska is required by statute to disclose to whom tickets to University events are given. This is important because two season tickets for football are valued at \$798 and state officials must report gifts over \$100. Thus, football tickets are the single gift that can be crosschecked between donor and recipient.

To increase public confidence in the reporting system we do the crosscheck each year.

The charts below were compiled from the 2017 University of Nebraska's Principal's Report and the senators' Statements of Financial Interest. The charts show who accepted free tickets, the value placed on those tickets, and if the value was reported to the Accountability and Disclosure Commission.

Two Season Football Tickets

Valued at \$798. No foundation donation required.

Everyone listed accepted tickets (Total estimated value \$11,970).

| Senator | Gift | Reporting Status |
|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| Roy Baker | 2 Season Football Tickets | |
| Kate Bolz | 2 Season Football Tickets | Not Reported |
| Tom Brewer | 2 Season Football Tickets | |
| Robert Clements | 2 Season Football Tickets | Not Reported |
| Sue Crawford | 2 Season Football Tickets | |
| Laura Ebke | 2 Season Football Tickets | Not Reported |
| Sara Howard | 2 Season Football Tickets | |
| Tyson Larson | 2 Season Football Tickets | |
| Brett Lindstrom | 2 Season Football Tickets | |
| Mike McDonnell | 2 Season Football Tickets | Not Reported |
| Adam Morfeld | 2 Season Football Tickets | |
| Tony Vargas | 2 Season Football Tickets | Not Reported |
| Lynne Walz | 2 Season Football Tickets | Not Reported |

* Statistics recorded on 2/7/17

Two Single Game Football Tickets in Skybox Seating

In 2017 the University reported that 8 senators were entertained with press box tickets. Two tickets were valued at \$150. Only one senator reported the gift. (Total estimated value \$1,200).

| Senator | Reporting Status |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Dan Watermeier | Not Reported |
| Roy Baker | Not Reported |
| Matt Hansen | Not Reported |
| Adam Morfeld | Not Reported |
| Robert Hilkemann | Statement not filed as of 3/16/17 |
| Matt Williams | Reported |
| Galen Hadley | Not Reported |
| Jim Smith | Not Reported |

Press Box Entertainment and Parking Passes

In 2018 the University reported senators were entertained in the press box but the senators paid for their tickets. Since access to press box tickets is not available to the public, Common Cause believes access to those tickets is a perk that should be reported. Below we have identified who got tickets, who paid for tickets and parking passes and who reported tickets as a gift.

| Senator | Game | Received | Reporting Status |
|------------------|--------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mike Hilgers | Arkansas St. | 2 tickets / 1 parking pass | \$159.00 Paid |
| Robert Hilkemann | N. Illinois | 2 tickets / 1 parking pass | 159.00 Paid |
| Kate Bolz | N. Illinois | 2 tickets / 1 parking pass | 159.00 Gift: Not Reported |
| Mark Koltermann | Rutgers | 2 tickets / 1 parking pass | 159.00 Paid |
| Matt Williams | Rutgers | 4 tickets / 1 parking pass | 363.00 Gift: Reported |
| Lou Ann Linehan | Rutgers | 2 tickets / 1 parking pass | 159.00 Paid |
| Jim Scheer | Wisconsin | 2 tickets | 114.00 Paid |
| Jim Smith | Ohio State | 2 tickets / 1 parking pass | 159.00 Paid |
| John Lowe | Iowa | 2 tickets / 1 parking pass | 159.00 Paid |

The University announced the new policy offering the opportunity to pay for press box tickets with the following note to senators:

Date: XXX, 2018

From: Jenny Reeser, Director of Events

Re: Skybox Tickets

Dear XXX,

President Bounds is pleased that you were able to join him in his skybox for the UNL vs. XXX football game on XXX, 2017. The tickets for the game are complimentary. However, due to the accountability and disclosure statutes, we must report complimentary admission of state officials to state-sponsored events by name on our quarterly reports. If you would prefer to pay for the tickets, pricing is listed below.

2 Skybox Tickets @ \$57 = \$114.00

1 Parking Pass @ \$45 = \$45.00

Total = \$159.00

Please make a check payable to the **NU Foundation** and send to:

Jenny Reeser

University of Nebraska

3835 Holdrege Street

Lincoln, NE 68583-0745

Please contact me if you have any questions at (402) 472-7121.

We hope you enjoyed game!

Jenny Reeser

University of Nebraska

Now For Some Real Money

In Nebraska lobbyists get to play a major role in campaign fundraising.

Political Action Committees PACs

Political Action Committees are organizations established by corporations, labor unions, and other special interests to raise money from individuals for political campaigns or political causes. For many elected officials and candidates for public office, PAC's are the largest source of campaign funds. A survey of campaign contributions over \$250 will show how important PACs are to getting elected.

In Nebraska there are currently 111 active PACs. During the 2016 election cycle PACs contributed \$2,581,145.* More than a third of the PACs listed registered lobbyists as treasurers.

*2017 totals were not yet available at the time of reporting. Instead we chose to show figures from 2016 as an example.

Client Campaign Contributions

It is not uncommon for lobbyists to send a letter to an elected official informing them of a forthcoming campaign contribution. These contributions may be in the thousands of dollars. The recipient normally recognizes the fact that the lobbyist is the conduit even though the client is the donor. Although the contribution is not from the lobbyist the connection is clear and opportunities for influence may follow.

Altria Client Services (Phillip Morris), for example, spent **\$869,782** on lobbying over a 5-year period. Over a two-year period (03/17/16 to 11/06/17) Altria Client Services contributed \$55,000 in campaign contributions. The lobbyists under contract were Garth Alston, Bruning Law Group, Jensen, Rogert, and Associates, and Radcliffe and Associates.

Altria Client Services Campaign Contributions 2016-2017

Total donations: \$51,000.

| Date | Contribution | Recipient |
|-------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| 03/17/16 | 5,000 | NE Republican Party |
| 04/06/16 | 2,500 | Pete Ricketts for Gov |
| 06/24/16 | 1,000 | Pete Ricketts for Gov |
| 07/18/16 | 500 | Pete Ricketts for Gov |
| 07/19/16 | 1,000 | Jim Smith |
| 07/20/16 | 1,000 | Friends of Mike Hilgers – Leg. |
| 07/28/16 | 1,000 | Greg Neuhaus |
| 08/04/16 | 500 | Tommy Garrett, Com. To Elect |
| 08/05/16 | 1,000 | Lou Ann Linehan for Leg. |
| 08/06/16 | 500 | Anna Wishart for Leg. |
| 08/08/16 | 500 | Lammers for Leg. |
| 08/10/16 | 500 | Ian Swanson for Leg. |
| 08/14/16 | 1,000 | Karl Elmshaeuser for NE |
| 08/14/16 | 500 | Jim Scheer for Leg. |
| 08/18/16 | 500 | John Lowe for Leg. |
| 08/19/16 | 500 | John Murante for Leg. |
| 08/26/16 | 500 | Lydia Brasch for Leg |
| 08/29/16 | 500 | Suzanne Geist for Leg |
| 09/02/16 | 500 | Dan Watermeier for Leg. |
| 09/07/16 | 500 | Tom Briese for Leg. |
| 09/08/16 | 500 | Steve Holloran for Leg. |
| 10/24/16 | 10,000 | NE Republican Party |
| 03/06/17 | 5,000 | NE Republican Party |
| 08/25/17 | 2,000 | Stinner for Leg. |
| 08/29/17 | 1,000 | Joni Craighead for leg. |
| 09/01/17 | 1,000 | Wayne for NE |
| 09/07/17 | 1,000 | Ebke for Leg. |
| 09/07/17 | 1,000 | Matt Williams for Leg. |
| 09/25/17 | 1,000 | Tom Brewer for Leg. |
| 09/26/17 | 1,000 | Friends of Lindstrom |
| 10/03/17 | 1,000 | Kolterman for Leg. |
| 10/05/17 | 1,000 | Friends of Mike Hilgers-Leg |
| 10/08/17 | 5,000 | Pete Ricketts for Gov. |
| 11/06/17 | 1,000 | Doug Peterson Ag |

Most money spent goes to lobbyist fees. The campaign dollars have a more direct effect on the elected officials.

Peetz and Company Direct Campaign Contributions 2016

Peetz and Company is an example of a lobbying firm that makes direct campaign contributions.

In 2016, Peetz contributed a total of \$18,675.

| Recipient | Contribution |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Al Davis for Legislature | \$500 |
| Burke Harr for Legislature | 500 |
| Citizens to Elect Jim Smith | 500 |
| Committee to Elect Tommy Garrett | 500 |
| Doug Peterson for AG | 1,000 |
| Festersen for City Council | 500 |
| Friends for Sue Crawford | 500 |
| Friends of Lindstrom | 500 |
| Friends of Mike Hilgers - Legislature | 500 |
| Greg Neuhaus for Legislature | 500 |
| John Lowe for Legislature | 500 |
| Kolowski for Legislature | 1,000 |
| Kolterman for Legislature | 500 |
| Lincoln Independent Business PAC | 1,500 |
| Linehan for Legislature | 500 |
| Matt Williams for Legislature, Inc. | 500 |
| McCollister for Legislature | 1,500 |
| Murante for Legislature | 1,000 |
| NE Chamber of Commerce PAC | 300 |
| NE Democratic Party | 625 |
| NE Republican Party | 1,250 |
| Pansing Brooks for Legislature | 500 |
| Paul Kenney for Regent | 500 |
| Pete Ricketts for Governor | 1,000 |
| Seiler for Unicameral | 500 |
| Stinner for Legislature | 500 |
| Suzanne C. Geist for Legislature | 500 |
| Watermeier for Legislature | 500 |
| Wayne for Nebraska | 500 |

Note: 2017 totals were not yet available at the time of reporting. Instead we chose to show figures from 2016 as an example.

In-Session Fundraisers

An opportunity to make a real friend

Lobbyist sponsored in-session fundraisers work well for both the lobbyist and the senators. The senators are in town, the lobbyists are in the rotunda, and the bills are on the floor. It is estimated that thousands of campaign dollars can be raised at breakfast just an hour before senators vote.

The invitation that goes out to senators offers a free meal. The opportunity for the lobbyists asks \$100 at the door. Lobbyists may bring checks from their clients as well. These are closed events. The public and the press are not invited. Since much of the money comes in contributions under \$250, it can be reported as cash making it nearly impossible to trace.

Twenty-nine states prohibit in-session fundraisers but Nebraska isn't one of them. Common Cause Nebraska has supported legislation to prohibit these events but the Government Committee has refused to advance the bills.

One might think that term limit-limited senators would not have to raise money during their second term. That is not always the case. Some term limited folks like a healthy war chest for future endeavors.

Lobbyist sponsored fundraisers take place throughout the year, but we believe money-changing hands during the session can lend itself to corruption.

In-session Fundraisers Scheduled for 2018

| January | February | March |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1: Senator Linehan | 8: Senator Murante* | 7: Senator Ebke |
| 9: Senator Howard* | 21: Senator Lindstrom | 8: Senator Lowe |
| 24: Senator Hansen | 21: Senator Morfeld | 22: Senator Blood |
| 26: Senator Harr* | 28: Senator McCollister | 27: Senator Vargas |

* Term Limited

The Revolving Door

The “Revolving Door” continues to turn as Nebraska’s elected officials leave their offices to join the lobbying ranks. When we elect senators we expect them to serve the interest of their constituents and the state. As a result, they gain special knowledge and relationships. This background is a public trust. It should not be bought and sold.

Special interests outside of government are more than willing to buy that knowledge and use those relationships to influence public policy.

Common Cause believes there should be a 2-year “cooling off period” before public officials can become paid lobbyists.

| Official/Lobbyist | Years Served | Registered | 1 st yr. | 2 nd yr. | 2016 | 2017 |
|-------------------|--------------|------------|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Chris Abboud | 1983-1998 | 2000* | \$7,500 [#] | \$49,470 [#] | \$131,000 [#] | \$59,888 [#] |
| Greg Adams | 2007-2015 | 2016 | 6,666 | 40,000 | 6,666 (4 th Q only) | 40,555 |
| Allen Beermann | 1971-1995 | 2000* | 2,000 | 4,000 | 4,000 | 4,000 |
| Curt Bromm | 1993-2004 | 2005 | 116,000 | 146,500 | 149,816 | 116,068 |
| Jon Bruning | 2003-2015 | 2015 | 132,000 [#] | 288,000 [#] | 288,664 [#] | 406,968 [#] |
| Danielle Conrad | 2007-2015 | 2015 | 12,991 | 6,658 | 6,658 | 11,792 |
| Annette Dubas | 2007-2015 | 2015 | 3,500 | 8,000 | 8,000 | 8,000 |
| Nicole Fox | 2015-2016 | 2017 | 5,833/mo. | | | 37,173 |
| Tim Gay | 2006-2010 | 2011 | 54,961 | 61,793 | 150,000 | 100,000 |
| Karen Kilgarin | 1981-1984 | 2000* | 9,101 | 18,524 | 9,624 | 13,077 |
| Scott Lautenbaugh | 2007-2014 | 2015 | 68,000 | 21,750 | 21,750 | 119,000 |
| John Lindsay | 1989-1997 | 2000* | 62,126 | 126,049 | 100,000 | 100,260 |
| Jan McKenzie | 1993-1997 | 2000* | 3,000 | 19,000 | 40,000 | 48,691 |
| Heath Mello | 2009-2017 | 2017 | 66,000 | | | 66,000 |
| Mick Mines | 2003-2007 | 2008 | 56,000 | 76,000 | 157,650 | 162,894 |
| James Pappas | 1983-1987 | 2000* | 6,000 | 28,000 | 23,000 | 3,950 |
| Kim Robak | 1993-1999 | 2005 | 1,261,386 [#] | 1,129,114 [#] | 1,162,916 [#] | 1,466,039 [#] |
| Kent Rogert | 2007-2011 | 2011 | 76,300 | 46,300 | 53,000 | 72,000 |
| Kenneth Schilz | 2008-2016 | 2017 | Bruning Firm [#] | | | 406,968 [#] |
| Don Wesely | 1979-1999 | 2004 | 36,000 | 84,000 | 135,385 | 141,001 |
| Ron Witheem | 1983-1997 | 2000* | 16,332 | 36,000 | 52,828 | 26,414 |

*First Online Registration

Firm Totals

ALEC

A lobbying organization with secrets

The **American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC)** is a nonprofit organization of conservative state legislators and private sector representatives who draft and share model state-level legislation for distribution among state governments in the United States.

ALEC’s approach to lobbying involves holding conferences in attractive location and “bringing together” legislators, lobbyists, and corporate representatives. The gatherings include breakout sessions where legislators can be educated and provided with actual bills ready to be taken home and introduced at their state legislatures. Corporate executives can get personal access to legislators while not having to be registered lobbyists.

Each state has a legislator identified as the ALEC chair whose job it is to recruit members and encourage other legislators to attend conferences. Memberships are kept secret and ALEC conferences are closed to the public and the press. ALEC bills are introduced as home grown without identifying who actually drafted the bills. ALEC conferences are held in the finest hotels in fun filled locations to attract participation.

ALEC “model legislation” often aims at privatization of education and healthcare, rolling back environmental regulations, and limiting consumer protection.

An organization known as Documented Investigations recently acquired an attendance list from the July 2017 ALEC conference in Denver Colorado. The following Nebraska senators were in attendance and identified as members:

| Senator | District |
|---|-----------------|
| Curt Friesen | 34 |
| Brett Lindstrom | 18 |
| Lou Ann Linehan | 39 |
| John Lowe | 37 |
| Merv Riepe | 12 |
| Jim Smith <i>State Chair and National Board Member</i> | 14 |
| John Stinner | 48 |

This list is not likely to include all Nebraska’s ALEC Legislators.

Senator Smith has refused to release his list of members but has reported that nearly half of Nebraska Senators have joined.

Should there be a secret organization operating within the Unicameral?

Appendix

University Tickets under the legislative reporting threshold of \$100

UNL Basketball Tickets

Total (\$480)

| Senator | Gift | Value |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|-------|
| Jim Scheer | 2 Suite UNL Basketball Tickets | \$60 |
| Matt Williams | 2 Suite UNL Basketball Tickets | \$60 |
| Mark Koltermann | 2 Suite UNL Basketball Tickets | \$60 |
| Matt Hansen | 2 Suite UNL Basketball Tickets | \$60 |
| Rick Kolowski | 2 Suite UNL Basketball Tickets | \$60 |
| John Lowe | 2 Suite UNL Basketball Tickets | \$60 |
| Tony Vargas | 2 Suite UNL Basketball Tickets | \$60 |
| Justin Wayne | 2 Suite UNL Basketball Tickets | \$60 |

UNO Hockey Tickets

Total (\$375)

| Senator | Gift | Value |
|------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Joni Craighead | 2 UNO Hockey Tickets | \$50 |
| Burke Harr | 3 UNO Hockey Tickets | \$75 |
| Robert Hilkemann | 2 UNO Hockey Tickets | \$50 |
| Bill Kintner | 1 UNO Hockey Tickets | \$25 |
| Rick Kolowski | 2 UNO Hockey Tickets | \$50 |
| Lou Ann Linehan | 2 UNO Hockey Tickets | \$50 |
| Mike McDonnell | 1 UNO Hockey Tickets | \$25 |
| Jim Smith | 2 UNO Hockey Tickets | \$50 |

Spring Game Tickets

Total for Senators: (\$110)

| Senator | Gift | Value |
|------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| Mike Groene | 2 Spring Game Tickets | \$10 |
| Robert Hilkemann | 2 Spring Game Tickets | \$10 |
| Dan Hughes | 2 Spring Game Tickets | \$10 |
| Rick Kolowski | 2 Spring Game Tickets | \$10 |
| Mark Kolterman | 2 Spring Game Tickets | \$10 |
| Bob Krist | 2 Spring Game Tickets | \$10 |
| Tyson Larson | 2 Spring Game Tickets | \$10 |
| Dan Quick | 2 Spring Game Tickets | \$10 |
| Merv Riepe | 2 Spring Game Tickets | \$10 |
| Lynn Walz | 2 Spring Game Tickets | \$10 |
| Matt Williams | 2 Spring Game Tickets | \$10 |

Total for Staff: (\$340)

All staff received 2 tickets valued at \$10.

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Patty Wade | Tom Arnsperger | Trinity Chappelle |
| Spencer Head | Brandon Bayer | Cheryl Kizzier |
| Laurie Weber | Kim Davis | Sherry Shaffer |
| Katie Chatters | Laura Olson | Beth Dineen |
| Craig Breunig | Janice Satra | Rod Krogh |
| Laurie Vollersten | Jeremiah Blake | William Marie Nau |
| Hadassah Moore | Natalie Schunk | Janice Foster |
| Tom Green | Meghan Chaffee | Timothy Duey |
| Mary Torell | Janet Anderson | Tyler Mahood |
| Josh Eickmeier | Christina Mayer | David Schulte |
| Alycia Brady | Shayna Bartow | Kristen Stiffler |
| Aaron Bos | | |