



New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics

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Joint Commission on Public Ethics Releases 2020 Annual Report

\$268.1 Million Spent on State and Local Lobbying; Down from 2019 Record

ALBANY – (July 8, 2021) – The Joint Commission on Public Ethics (“Commission”) today released its 2020 Annual Report, featuring highlights of its work during a very challenging year, as it continued to fulfill its mission of regulating compliance with ethics and lobbying laws in New York state while required to conduct much of its operations remotely as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Notwithstanding the operations challenges posed by the pandemic, the Commission initiated a rulemaking to make revisions to its comprehensive lobbying regulations (which took effect in early 2021), continued to roll out improvements to the Lobbying Application for required filings, and issued an important Advisory Opinion concerning indirect gifts to public officials – gifts made to third parties – at the behest, direction of, or for the benefit of a public official.

Total lobbying expenditures for 2020 were \$268.1 million, a significant decrease from the record-high spending of more than \$298 million in 2019. Despite that drop and the impact of COVID-19, this year’s spending figure was still more than the previous record, which was set in 2018. \$248 million of the 2020 spending went to compensate retained and in-house (employee) lobbyists.

The list of the top 10 highest-spending lobbying entities included traditionally active industries and interests related to business, real estate, healthcare, and education, but with some notable changes as to the entities within those industries that were in the Top 10. Six of the top 10 spenders listed COVID-19 related lobbying activities in their lobbying reports. The year also reflected a higher involvement of groups with criminal justice and civil rights

interests. Though it spent less than in 2019, Greater New York Hospital Association, Inc. took the top spot in 2020, reporting more than \$2.99 million in lobbying spending compared to 2019, when they ranked third among the top 10 entities with just over \$3 million. Last year's top spending entity, Taxpayers for An Affordable New York, which spent more than \$3.9 million in 2019, had no activity in 2020. Consistent with its ranking in 2019, 1199 SEIU Labor Management Initiatives, Inc. Healthcare Education Project continued to be the second-highest spender in 2020. Rounding out the top 10 in 2020 were New York State United Teachers (up from #9 in 2019); FWD.US, Inc. (new to the top 10); New York State Trial Lawyers Association (up from #10 last year); Genting New York LLC; AARP; FWRA LLC; New Yorkers United For Justice (down from #4 last year); and RAI Services Company (new to the top 10).

It is worth noting that even while total lobbying spending and total lobbyist compensation went down, the amount earned by the top 10 retained lobbyists actually went up in 2020. There were also some changes to the makeup of that top 10 list this past year, with Brown & Weinraub, PLLC taking the top spot for the first time, passing Kasirer LLC, which had been number 1 each year since 2016. The number three spot went to Bolton St. Johns, LLC (consistent with its 2019 ranking), while rounding out the 2020 top 10 were Greenberg Traurig, LLP; Ostroff Associates, Inc.; Mercury Public Affairs LLC; Park Strategies, LLC; Hinman Straub Advisors, LLC; Constantinople & Vallone Consulting LLC (returning to the list); and Davidoff Hutcher & Citron, LLP.

The largest reported payment by a single client to a lobbyist was \$1,013,041, paid by FWRA LLC to Stroock & Stroock & Lavan LLP. This primarily represented compensation paid for lobbying related to real estate development in the Flushing, Queens waterfront district.

The complete source data filed by lobbyists and their clients for 2020 was also published to the Commission's website, jcope.ny.gov, today, and can be found here. Tables summarizing some of the 2020 lobbying data highlights appear at the end of this release. Additionally, Public Search Query results can be downloaded as spreadsheets for further analysis.

To access the 'Public Data' page, select the 'About' main menu from the JCOPE website and then select 'Public Data' from the drop-down menu. From the Public Data page, access the

Public Search Query from the 'Lobbying Data on Demand' section of the page. Scroll down to the 'Alphabetical and other Reports' section of the Public Data page to access the Lobbying Reports.

The report also highlights some of the Commission's achievements and successes in the areas key to its mission – education, regulation, and enforcement activities.

During the year, the Education Unit was able to continue conducting its numerous ethics training programs for financial disclosure statement filers, State agency ethics officers, and lobbying entities by pivoting to provide those programs utilizing videoconferencing technology, and at the same time, continuing to provide specialized training to meet the unique needs of agencies and those subject to the Commission's jurisdiction. Commission staff also handled hundreds of requests for advice and guidance, even though the overall number of requests was lower than normal due to state office closures during the year.

Commission Investigations staff actively initiated and continued to pursue investigations and enforcement actions for alleged violations of Public Officers Law and the Lobbying Act, although delays in its operations were caused by witness unavailability and hurdles with the services of subpoenas due to the pandemic. The Commission entered into four settlement agreements, including one with the former Executive Director of the Committee on Open Government in connection with allegations that he violated State ethics laws through his sexually inappropriate conduct during interactions with colleagues and members of the media, as well as for his misuse of State resources during his time on the job.

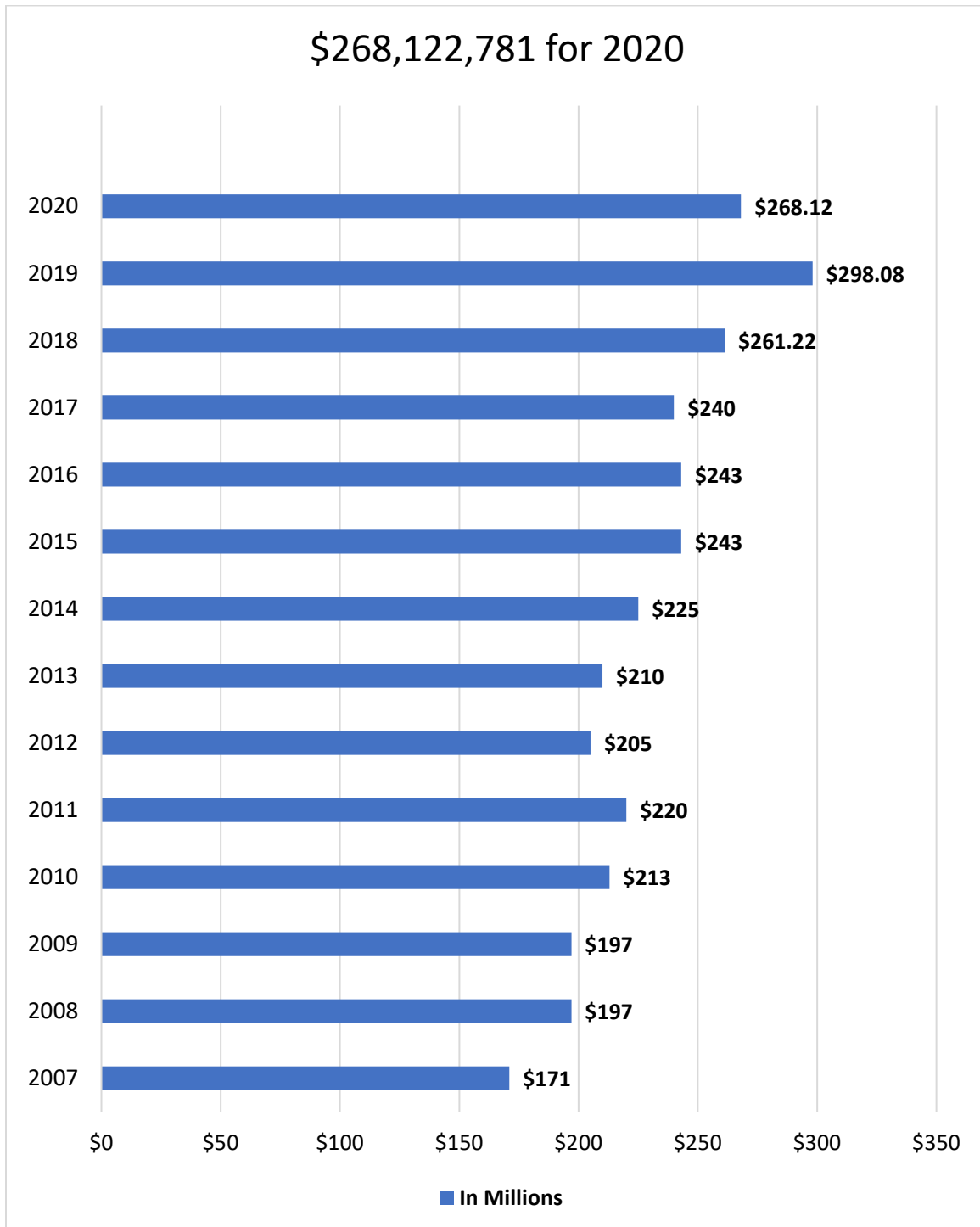
More detailed information on investigative matters, guidance and outreach, and audit and review of financial disclosure statements and required lobbying filings can be found in the 2020 annual report itself.

2020 Lobbying Data Highlights

The following tables summarize additional lobbying data.

LOBBYING SPENDING

Year-over-year Comparison on Total \$ Spent on Lobbying



Based on the combined figures of compensation and expenses reported on Client Semi-Annual and Public Corporation Reports.

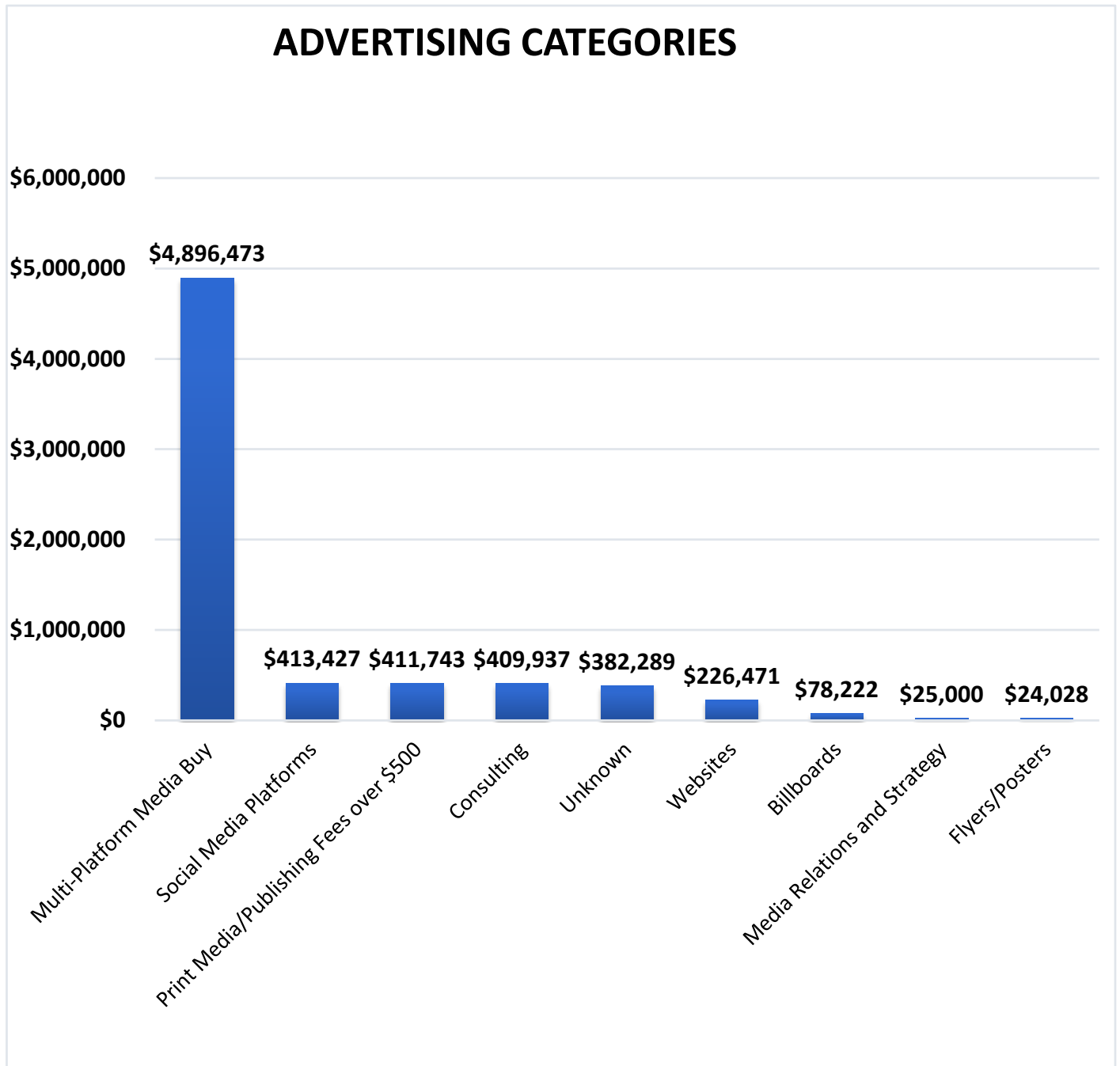
LOBBYING ENTITIES BY TOTAL SPENDING

Clients and Public Corporations Ranked by Compensation and Expenses

CLIENT	AMOUNT
GREATER NEW YORK HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION, INC.	\$2,991,319
1199SEIU LABOR MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES, INC. HEALTHCARE EDUCATION PROJECT	\$2,535,250
UNITED TEACHERS (NYS)	\$2,165,408
FWD.US, INC.	\$1,388,516
TRIAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (NYS)	\$1,359,292
GENTING NEW YORK LLC	\$1,221,000
AARP	\$1,181,438
FWRA LLC	\$1,180,548
NEW YORKERS UNITED FOR JUSTICE (Coalition)	\$1,096,049
RAI SERVICES COMPANY	\$1,092,303

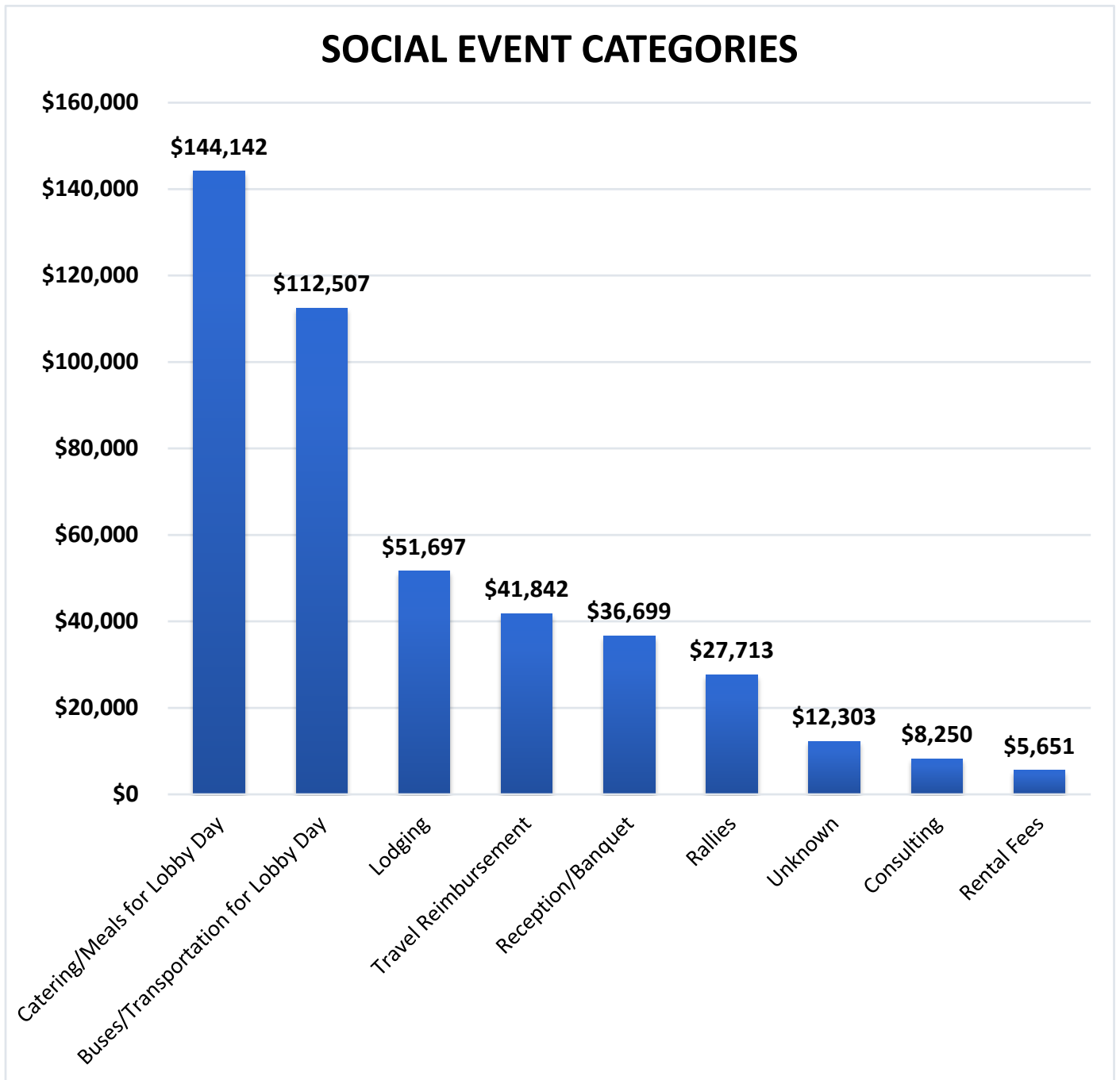
Ranking based on compensation and expense information (aggregate expenses less than \$75; aggregate expenses of salaries of non-lobbying employees; and itemized expenses) reported in Client Semi-Annual Reports and Public Corporation Filings submitted as of April 27, 2021.

LOBBYING EXPENSE COMPARISON



Information collected from defined expense categories indicated on itemized expenses reported in Client Semi-Annual Reports submitted as of April 27, 2021.

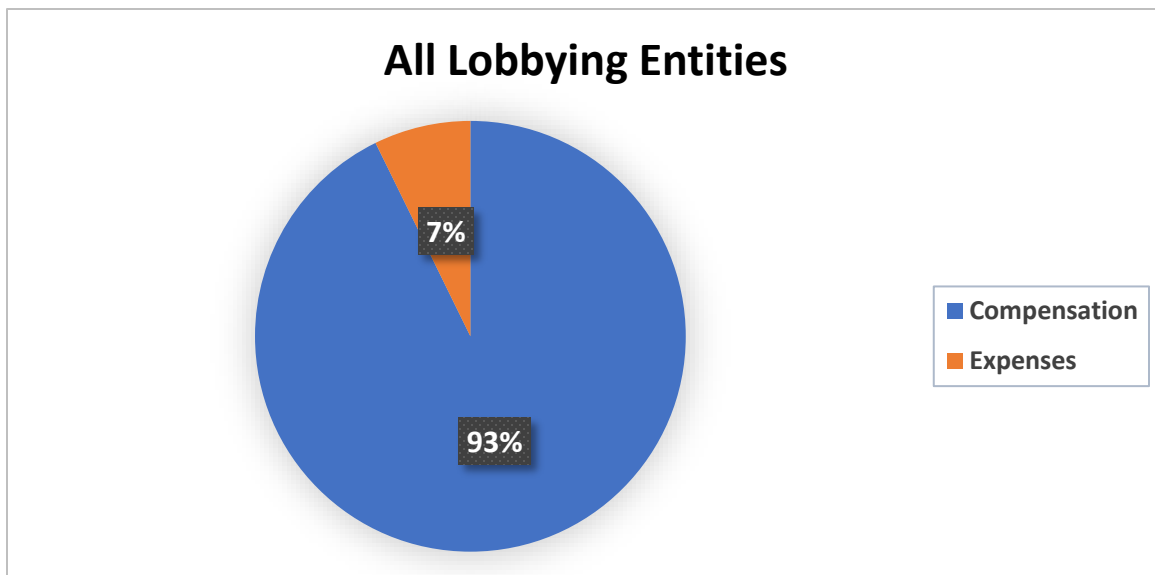
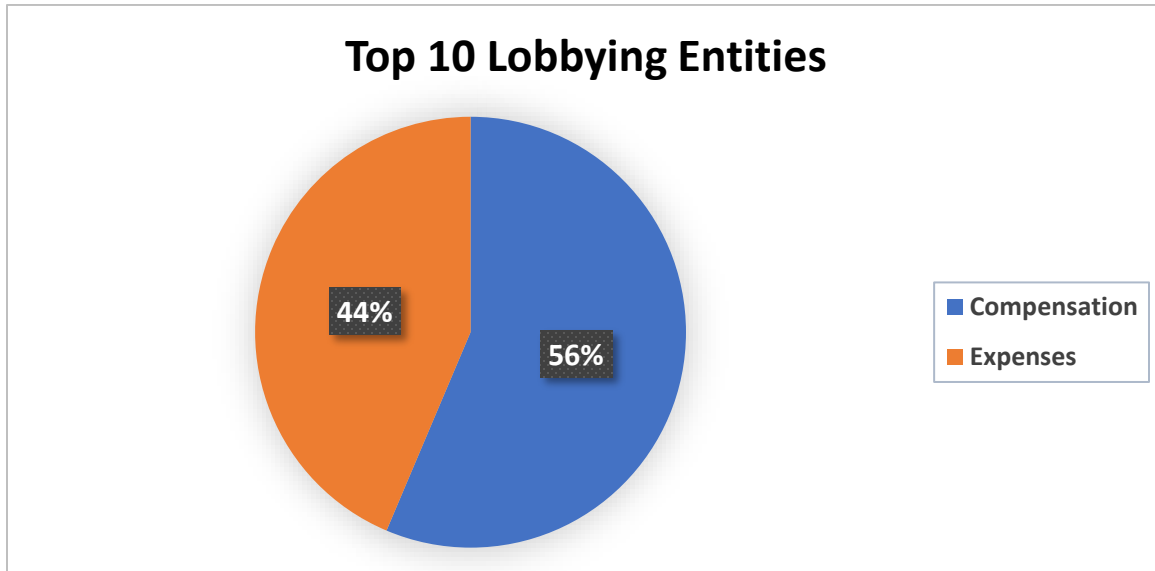
LOBBYING EXPENSE COMPARISON



Information collected from defined expense categories indicated on itemized expenses reported in Client Semi-Annual Reports submitted as of April 27,2021.

ALLOCATION OF LOBBYING EXPENDITURES

Compensation and Expenses from Top 10 Lobbying Entities and all Lobbying Entities



Based on compensation and expenses (aggregate expenses less than \$75; aggregate expenses of salaries of non-lobbying employees; and itemized expenses) reported in Client Semi-Annual Reports and Public Corporation Filings submitted as of April 27, 2021.

PROFESSIONAL LOBBYISTS

Retained Lobbyists Ranked by Compensation Reported

LOBBYIST	AMOUNT
BROWN & WEINRAUB, PLLC	\$14,352,176
KASIRER LLC	\$14,142,309
BOLTON ST. JOHNS, LLC	\$12,773,187
GREENBERG TRAURIG, LLP	\$11,300,036
OSTROFF ASSOCIATES, INC.	\$7,407,983
MERCURY PUBLIC AFFAIRS LLC	\$7,162,416
PARK STRATEGIES, LLC	\$7,096,611
HINMAN STRAUB ADVISORS, LLC	\$6,543,902
CONSTANTINOPOLE & VALLONE CONSULTING LLC	\$5,596,402
DAVIDOFF HUTCHER & CITRON, LLP.	\$5,502,251

Ranking based on compensation information reported in Lobbyist Bi-Monthly Reports submitted as of April 27, 2021.

TOP PAYMENTS TO LOBBYISTS FROM A SINGLE CLIENT

Retained Lobbyists Ranked by Compensation and Reimbursed Expenses Paid by a Single Client

CLIENT	LOBBYIST	AMOUNT
FWRA LLC	STROOCK & STROOCK & LAVAN LLP	\$1,013,041
TWO PILLARS, LLC	BRYAN CAVE LEIGHTON PAISNER LLP	\$591,583
TRIAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (NYS)	RIDDETT ASSOCIATES INC	\$532,932
GENTING NEW YORK LLC	CORDO & COMPANY, LLC	\$513,000
RXR DEVELOPMENT SERVICES LLC	FRIED FRANK HARRIS SHRIVER & JACOBSON, LLP.	\$502,493
TRIAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (NYS)	JENKINS, PATRICK B. & ASSOCIATES	\$480,000
LATCHABLE, INC.	TUSK STRATEGIES, INC.	\$420,000
EXCELLUS HEALTH PLAN, INC.	HINMAN STRAUB ADVISORS, LLC	\$401,342
GREATER NEW YORK HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION, INC.	MIRRAM GROUP LLC	\$360,000
NEW YORK BANKERS ASSOCIATION INC.	SHENKER RUSSO & CLARK LLP	\$350,000

Ranking based on compensation and reimbursed expense information reported in Lobbyist Bi-Monthly Reports submitted as of April 27, 2021.

TOP 20 TOPIC TRENDS

Lobbying Subjects Ranked by Selections Indicated in 2020 Lobbyist Bi-Monthly and Public Corporation Bi-Monthly Reports

SUBJECTS LOBBIED	TOTAL # REPORTED BY LOBBYISTS FOR A CLIENT
Budget/Appropriations	4,935
Miscellaneous Business - General	4,152
Real Estate - General	3,923
Health - General	3,697
Economic Development - General	2,135
Education - General	1,665
Transportation - General	1,507
Labor - General	1,217
Energy & Natural Resources - General	1,026
Construction - General	945
Finance, Insurance & Financial Services - General	937
Health - Pharmaceuticals/ Health Products	928
Health - Hospitals & Nursing Homes	864
Health - Medicine/ Medicaid	849
Consumer Issues/Safety/Protection	765
Energy & Natural Resources - Environmental Conservation/Preservation	764
Labor - Labor Issues/ Unions	742
Insurance - Health	721
Real Estate - Construction	668
Health - Health Professions	655

Count information: Subjects lobbied represent the number of lobbyists who reported the activity on behalf of client, in at least one report. Subjects lobbied reported as submitted as of April 27, 2021.

COMPARISON OF STATE AND MUNICIPAL LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

Information on Lobbying Activities and How Attempts to Influence Were Conducted in 2020

STATE LEVEL ACTIVITIES	# DIRECT LOBBIED	# GRASSROOTS LOBBIED	# OF BOTH	# MONITORED ONLY	CATEGORY TOTALS
Bills	41,231	996	8,593	37,481	88,301
Executive order	2,944	37	73	278	3,332
Funding	1,625	102	179	105	2,011
Permits/Licensing	198	39	13	8	258
Procurements	1,228	1	52	117	1,398
Regulation/Rate Making/Rule	2,847	107	515	435	3,904
Resolution	592	7	36	16	651
Tribal Compact Agreement	8	0	0	0	8
GRAND TOTAL	50,673	1,289	9,461	38,440	99,863
MUNICIPAL LEVEL ACTIVITIES	# DIRECT LOBBIED	# GRASSROOTS LOBBIED	# OF BOTH	# MONITORED ONLY	CATEGORY TOTALS
Bills	3,632	109	815	308	4,864
Executive order	105	3	13	0	121
Funding	1,011	40	112	15	1,178
Ordinance	53	5	4	3	65
Procurements	1,343	3	36	35	1,417
Regulation/Rate Making/Rule	1,699	35	129	22	1,885
Resolution	908	9	51	21	989
Permits/Licensing	245	3	19	6	273
GRAND TOTAL	8,996	207	1,179	410	10,792

Information collected from State and Municipal lobbying activities reported in Lobbyist and Public Corporation Bi-Monthly reports submitted as of April 27, 2021.