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Before the House Elections Committee
HB 2314
Michael R. Murray
February 18, 2013

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I'm submitting this testimony in support of HB 2314 which amends current lobbyist statutes.

Among other things, the bill would raise from \$2 to \$15 the threshold for reporting itemized food and beverage expenditures. There are a number of instances where a meal is sponsored by several organizations and when the math is done, the amount spent by each sponsor is very small, like \$2 and change, \$3 or \$5. But, those expenses must be itemized today.

Also the bill would raise from \$100 annually to \$500 annually the amount which can be provided in recreation accompanied by the lobbyist. Currently, the \$100 limit includes not only the legislator, but the legislator's spouse. Under this bill, the limit would not apply to the legislator's spouse as it does today. An awkward situation arises when you take a legislator and his or her spouse to, for instance, a football game. Those tickets are priced between \$55 and \$75 or \$85 each. Under the current law the legislator must reimburse me for the amount over \$99.99 because the spouse is included in the \$100 limit.

This is my 16th Legislative Session as a lobbyist, and I believe the current reporting requirements have been in effect for 15 years or so. I just think it is time for a review and some adjustment in the limits and thresholds contained in the law.

I do want to compliment the Director and staff of the Governmental Ethics Commission. I check with them frequently to make sure I'm doing things correctly, and they all are very responsive and helpful.

Respectfully, I ask that the Committee look favorably on HB 2314.