

MINNESOTA STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
Section Legislative Positions

Each year the MSBA contracts for lobbying services from Winthrop & Weinstine. The lobbying contract is based upon estimates of the number of hours of lobbying time required to achieve the legislative goals of the MSBA. The MSBA legislative agenda has increased in the last several years, leading to increased demands on the lobbyist's time. As a result, it is necessary to either reduce the time demands placed on the lobbyist or increase the financial resources devoted to the legislative area.

This proposal establishes a procedure to limit the time demands made under the existing lobbying contract and, at the same time, allow a section or committee to utilize lobbying resources when considered critical. The proposal only addresses those legislative actions that are proposed by a section or committee but not approved by the Assembly as part of the MSBA's legislative agenda. In those cases, the section or committee makes a request to the chairperson of the Legislative Committee for the use of the lobbyist's time and the chairperson responds to the request in one of several ways.

The procedures delegate significant authority to the chairperson of the Legislative Committee but include safeguards for reviewing the chairperson's decision.

Process for requesting lobbyist time for section¹ only legislative positions:

- A section identifies a legislative position (either in support of or opposed to legislation) and submits a request (i.e. Bill Summary Form) for lobbying support to the chairperson of the Legislative Committee.
- The Legislative Committee chairperson consults with the lobbyist to confirm the estimated lobbying hours required and the impact on other aspects of the MSBA's legislative agenda.
- The Legislative Committee chairperson:
 - Denies the request; or,
 - Approves the request and allocates lobbyist time available under the existing lobbying contract; or,
 - Informs the section that a specific number of lobbying hours will be made available to the section at a predetermined hourly rate which the section must pay to the MSBA. (The MSBA will contract for supplemental lobbying services.) If at the end of the legislative year the section's request for lobbying assistance was partial or completely satisfied

¹ Where this process refers to "section" it is intended to include committees as well. However, since committees do not generally have funds available, their request to appropriate funds for a lobbying effort must be submitted like other committee requests for funding.

without the need for a supplemental lobbying contract, then the section will receive a partial or full refund of any charges; or

- Develops a response that otherwise achieves the goals of this policy.

- The Legislative Committee chairperson will notify the lobbyist, requesting section, and the members of the Legislative Committee of his/her decision. If the section disagrees with the decision, the section may ask the chairperson to convene a meeting of the Legislative Committee within three business days to consider the request. The chairperson will make every reasonable effort to convene a meeting of the Legislative Committee, which may occur telephonically or electronically, in order to address the section's appeal. If a member of the Legislative Committee disagrees with the action of the chairperson, his/her recourse is to ask to have the matter considered at the next meeting of the Legislative Committee, however, the specific decision of the chairperson cannot be overturned.