



SB 1349 – **SUPPORT** Nonprofit Lobbying Registration Fee Waiver

SUMMARY:

SB 1349 directs the Secretary of State's office to grant a waiver of the lobbyist registration fee for 501c3 nonprofits with an annual budget of less than \$5,000,000, including a waiver for any lobbyist that exclusively lobbies on behalf of such an entity.

EQUITY NOTE:

Smaller 501c3 nonprofit organizations have difficulty finding revenue for lobbyist registration fees. Multiple bodies of research show that smaller organizations are more likely to be led by People of Color and/or serve Communities of Color. Removing the fee barrier will support inclusion of their voices in the policymaking process.

RATIONALE/NEED:

- Lobbyist registration fee is set in statute at \$300 per entity + \$300 per lobbyist; there are no exceptions. A statutory change is required to provide a nonprofit fee waiver.
- Compared to the private sector, nonprofits disproportionately struggle to access unrestricted funding for lobbyist registration fees. Many grants and contracts exclude such use. Eliminating this barrier will improve compliance and engagement.
- Waiving fees at the state level is consistent with the City of Chicago lobbying registration policy, which already provides a nonprofit lobbying fee waiver.
- Waiving lobbyist registration fees for 501c3 nonprofits will ensure legislators continue to hear crucial perspectives from their local nonprofit stakeholders.

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