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The lobby bill has now passed both houses!

On Friday, the Senate concurred with House Amendments # 1 and # 3 to Senate Bill 1526 with a vote of 55 (yes) - 0 (no) - 0 (present) - which made it unanimous. These amendments to the original bill specifically clarify some issues ISAE took with investigations by the Inspector General and **set the registration fee at \$300** for the organization and each registered lobbyist.

ISAE was upfront and center on the negotiations that lead to the fee being set at \$300. This is an amount lower than previously paid by all entities except 501(c)(3) organizations and is a significant difference from the original fee of \$1000. While we agree that it was ACLU's lawsuit which found the \$1000 fee unconstitutional, it was ISAE's still pending lawsuit that gave us the negotiating power to see the fee set at \$300 and leave open the door for the fee to be lowered in future years depending on the actual costs for the Secretary of State's (SOS) office to enforce the law.

ISAE was also responsible for insuring that all fees remain in the Secretary of State's funding for enforcement. No part of the \$300 fee will be placed in the general fund.

ISAE has also secured a commitment from the SOS to lessen the burden of reporting requirements that start in 2011 by ensuring we have a "no change" button that will make it easier to do reporting twice monthly.

ISAE will not withdraw our lawsuit until this legislation is signed by the Governor, expected some time this summer. We would then expect current registered organizations and lobbyists to be required to pay the \$300 fees around the time of the first 2010 report which is due in July.

Currently ISAE legal and legislative fees are \$30,000 and still climbing. Our thanks to the 40 associations, corporations and individuals who have contributed \$24,000 to help off set costs. ISAE did not have the funds for these expenses budgeted, so contributions from members who have not yet made a contribution are still needed! All amounts will be welcomed.

ISAE has saved your organization, if it is required to register, a minimum of \$1400. A piece of that savings to help ISAE meet these unscheduled obligations is truly needed. Funds have been taken from reserves to meet the obligations and like all organizations, our reserves have taken a big hit in the past year. If you can help, please do!

ISAE expects to have several representatives on the Special Taskforce, to be formed by the SOS later this year, to help address several outstanding issues we have with this law. We have already met with SOS representatives about the issues and they too are asking for our input to help address some of theirs.

There is more work to be done and ISAE stands ready to do it - for you and your organization. Thank you for your support!