

Summary of the Close the Revolving Door Act of 2015

- **Permanently bans Representatives and Senators from Lobbying After they Retire.**

The current law prohibits Senators from lobbying for a two-year period after leaving Congress. House members have a one-year ban on lobbying. The legislation permanently bans both House and Senate members from lobbying either house of Congress after they retire.

- **Increases the Statutory Staff Restrictions on Lobbying from One Year to Six Years.**

Under the current law, senior Senate staff members are barred from lobbying any Senator or employee of the Senate for a one year period.

Senior House staff who work in personal offices are barred from lobbying the Member for whom they worked or the staff of that Member for a one year period. The current law also prohibits senior Committee staff in the House from lobbying current Members, committee staff, or certain former Members of the Committee for a period of one year. Similarly, senior staff in House leadership offices are prohibited from lobbying any Member of the House leadership or any leadership staff for a one year period. For the purposes of these restrictions, “senior staff” refers to individuals who are compensated at 75% or more than the pay of a House member or Senator (depending on where the individual worked).

Finally, senior staff member in other legislative offices in Congress are prohibited from lobbying officers or employees of their former office for a period of one year. For this specific provision, “senior staff” refers to employees who are compensated in an amount equal or greater than level IV of the Executive schedule.

The bill increases all of the foregoing one-year prohibitions to six years.

- **Prohibits lobbyists from working for members of Congress and Committees with whom they had a substantial lobbying contact for a period of six years.**
- **Increases Disclosure for Lobbying Activities.**

The legislation requires lobbying firms to file with Congress a list of any employee who provides paid consulting services who is:

- (1) a former Senator or Representative;
- (2) a former congressional staff member who:
 - made at least \$100,000 in any 1 year;
 - worked for a total of 4 years or more as a congressional staff member; or
 - held a senior staff position in Congress (*e.g.*, chiefs of staff, legislative directors, staff directors, counsels, communications directors).

The bill also creates a website entitled, “lobbyists.gov” that will provide easily searchable disclosures on lobbying activities.

- **Increases penalties for violating the Lobbying Disclosure Act from \$200,000 to \$500,000.**