Pursuit of Earmarks

Democrats in charge of Congress have said they wanted to cut down on the number of narrowly focused projects called earmarks. But they have not cut them out.

As a result, interests of all sorts have continued to hire lobbyists in large numbers to obtain them. Few groups are more active in this than states and localities.

In the first six months of this year, city and state governments spent about $34 million of their taxpayers' money on lobbying the federal government, putting them on track to exceed the $67 million they spent in 2006. In 2000, they spent just $35 million.

Top 15 city and state entities to spend money on federal lobbying in 2007 (as of mid-year)

Client	Amount spent, thousands
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania	$505
Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration	320
Miami-Dade County, Fla.	320
Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission	280
Los Angeles County	265
Puerto Rico Industrial Development Co.	240
San Diego County	220
City of Phoenix	205
City of Haines, Alaska	200
City of Jacksonville, Fla.	180
Government Devel. Bank of Puerto Rico	180
Sacramento Area Flood Control	180
Texas Office of State-Federal Relations	180
Broward County, Fla.	160
City of Indianapolis	140

SOURCE: Opensecrets.org

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