

MEDIA MENTION

Caleb Burns Weighs In on Issues with Lobbyist Disclosure Law Compliance

Bloomberg Government

April 8, 2019

Caleb P. Burns, partner in Wiley Rein's Election Law & Government Ethics Practice, was quoted by *Bloomberg Government* in an April 8 article about the low level of staffing at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia and how that is affecting lobbying law compliance.

According to *Bloomberg Government*, the U.S. Attorney's Office, which polices the lobbying industry, received nearly 3,800 referrals from the House and Senate about firms that potentially violated the law between 2009 and 2018, but about 59 percent of those referrals are still pending because the government has so few people tracking compliance with disclosure laws.

In 2016, enforcement of the Lobbying Disclosure Act (Public Law 104-65) was handled by a staff of seven, according to a report to Congress filed by the Government Accountability Office but, as of 2018, that staff at the U.S. Attorney's Office now consists of one part-time lawyer, one full-time paralegal, and one part-time paralegal.

For firms that want to stay on the right side of the law, "the lack of lawyers in the office has complicated matters when there are tricky legal issues to be resolved," Burns told *Bloomberg Government*.

According to *Bloomberg Government*, a House-passed bill, H.R. 1, would expand the definition of lobbying to include the strategic advisers that advise advocacy campaigns and lobbying efforts and decrease the threshold for registering as a lobbyist to 10 percent.

Related Professionals

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Practice Areas

Election Law & Government Ethics

Burns, a compliance attorney, said that broadening who is considered a lobbyist would be a “game changer.”