

Progress on Federal Lobbying Reform Legislation Stalled

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Despite earlier predictions that a compromise lobbying reform bill could be negotiated by House and Senate conferees prior to the July recess, lawmakers remain unable to reach an agreement on several key issues, including restrictions on 527 political organizations, and the fate of the bill is uncertain. In fact, Speaker Hastert has yet to appoint a set of House conferees, opting to wait until an informal agreement can be reached on some of the bill's more controversial provisions such as 527 reform.

In response to a provision initially included in the House version of the bill, the House Ethics Committee held a June 7, 2006 hearing on possible changes to House rules governing acceptance of privately funded travel. The hearing featured testimony from representatives of five different organizations as members sought input on the various proposals for reform. Although originally scheduled to release a list of its final recommendations by June 15, the committee has not put forward any proposals at this time.