



ERIE COUNTY COMPTROLLER

KEVIN R. HARDWICK

August 8, 2022

Henry Wojtaszek, Chief Executive Officer
Western Regional Off-Track Betting Corporation
8315 Park Road
Batavia, New York 14020

Re: Lobbyists/Advocates Retained by WROTB

Dear Mr. Wojtaszek:

In my capacity as Erie County's Chief Financial and Auditing Officer, I am writing to solicit information from the Western Regional Off-Track Betting Corporation (WROTB) concerning lobbyists/advocates/counselors retained by WROTB.

My office's review of WROTB board minutes indicates that since January 2014, WROTB appears to have utilized ten (10) firms for lobbying and advocacy activities, spending, at times, hundreds of thousands of dollars to pay individuals to represent WROTB interests. At any given time, three and as many as five firms were being paid by WROTB for work. For instance, based on board minutes, it appears that just in the first six months of 2022, you have paid, or agreed to pay three firms a total of \$157,000 for lobbying.

What are these lobbyists doing for WROTB? What are they advocating for (or against)? To whom are they lobbying? Why did you retain lobbyists? For how long have these lobbyists been under contract with WROTB? What process (RFP, bidding, etc.) did you utilize to retain these firms? Under what metrics do you measure their success, and continue to engage them (what successful results did they obtain for you)? Would you please provide their contracts to my office? How much have you paid lobbyists since January 2014? Please break down the dollar payments to each firm by year.

Thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation.

Sincerely,

Kevin R. Hardwick, Ph.D.
Erie County Comptroller

cc: Erie County Legislature
Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority
Francis Warthling, Erie County Director, WROTB
Richard D. Bianchi, Chair, WROTB Board of Directors