Federal lobbying, Q3 2026

Who pays, who gets paid, and on which issues. Data cutoff 2026-11-03 23:59 ET; the filing deadline was 2026-10-20.

24,364 reports. 1,754 outside firms reported $761.66M in income. In-house filers reported $819.56M in expenses. Estimated spend after removing overlap: $1.38B.

Eight-quarter trend

QUARTER	REPORTS	FIRMS	FIRM INCOME	IN-HOUSE EXPENSES	EST. SPEND
Q4 2024	2	0	$0	$1.10M	$1.10M
Q1 2025	23,594	2,072	$613.07M	$875.57M	$1.31B
Q2 2025	24,297	2,065	$684.58M	$849.70M	$1.33B
Q3 2025	24,721	2,073	$701.65M	$783.02M	$1.28B
Q4 2025	24,898	2,068	$716.81M	$822.88M	$1.34B
Q1 2026	25,449	2,066	$741.02M	$937.06M	$1.47B
Q2 2026	25,549	2,059	$771.21M	$834.78M	$1.40B
Q3 2026	24,364	1,754	$761.66M	$819.56M	$1.38B

Top firms by reported income

#	FIRM	STATE	INCOME	CLIENTS	LOBBYISTS
1	BALLARD PARTNERS	DC	$33.37M	335	34
2	BROWNSTEIN HYATT FARBER SCHRECK, LLP	DC	$22.57M	360	90
3	BGR GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS	DC	$22.54M	377	56
4	MILLER STRATEGIES, LLC	TX	$18.87M	175	13
5	AKIN GUMP STRAUSS HAUER & FELD	DC	$16.99M	319	62
6	CORNERSTONE GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, INC.	DC	$14.89M	364	89
7	CHECKMATE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS	NC	$13.27M	126	12
8	HOLLAND & KNIGHT LLP	DC	$12.52M	300	80
9	CONTINENTAL STRATEGY, LLC	DC	$12.45M	167	22
10	INVARIANT LLC	DC	$12.39M	194	53
11	THORN RUN PARTNERS	DC	$9.47M	253	39
12	CROSSROADS STRATEGIES, LLC	DC	$8.42M	167	25

#	FIRM	STATE	INCOME	CLIENTS	LOBBYISTS
13	SQUIRE PATTON BOGGS	DC	$7.82M	183	40
14	CASSIDY & ASSOCIATES, INC.	DC	$7.73M	169	34
15	MEHLMAN CONSULTING, INC.	DC	$7.32M	130	24
16	MERCURY PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LLC	DC	$7.21M	108	25
17	STRATEGIC MARKETING INNOVATIONS	DC	$6.79M	177	29
18	CAPITOL COUNSEL LLC	DC	$6.75M	162	38
19	S-3 GROUP	DC	$6.62M	119	21
20	TIBER CREEK GROUP	DC	$6.48M	123	21
21	MICHAEL BEST STRATEGIES LLC	DC	$6.40M	101	19
22	FORBES-TATE	DC	$6.04M	131	25
23	TARPLIN, DOWNS & YOUNG, LLC	DC	$5.57M	81	11
24	MINDSET ADVOCACY, LLC	DC	$5.53M	111	18
25	WILLIAMS AND JENSEN, PLLC	DC	$5.47M	137	24

Top payers by estimated spend

#	PAYER	EST. SPEND	IN-HOUSE	OUTSIDE FEES	FIRMS
1	NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS	$27.40M	$27.40M	$240K	5
2	CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE U.S.A.	$16.48M	$16.48M	$0	0
3	PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH AND MANUFACTURERS OF AMERICA	$7.04M	$7.04M	$1.35M	21
4	KOCH GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, LLC	$6.77M	$6.77M	$520K	9
5	META PLATFORMS, INC. AND VARIOUS SUBSIDIARIES	$5.88M	$5.88M	$40K	1
6	THE BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE, INC.	$5.81M	$5.81M	$800K	16
7	AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION	$4.58M	$4.58M	$200K	3
8	AARP	$4.57M	$4.57M	$298K	8
9	AMAZON.COM SERVICES LLC	$4.49M	$4.49M	$365K	6
10	LOCKHEED MARTIN CORPORATION	$4.09M	$4.09M	$480K	13
11	CTIA-THE WIRELESS ASSOCIATION	$3.94M	$3.94M	$865K	19
12	AMERICAN HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION	$3.84M	$3.84M	$350K	5
13	PFIZER INC.	$3.60M	$3.60M	$570K	11
14	GENERAL MOTORS COMPANY	$3.56M	$3.56M	$650K	16
15	GENERAL DYNAMICS CORP	$3.32M	$3.32M	$862K	20
16	GOOGLE CLIENT SERVICES LLC	$3.23M	$3.23M	$925K	16

#	PAYER	EST. SPEND	IN-HOUSE	OUTSIDE FEES	FIRMS
17	PHARMACEUTICAL CARE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION	$3.20M	$3.20M	$160K	4
18	SOUTHERN COMPANY	$3.20M	$3.20M	$290K	6
19	AMGEN INC	$3.15M	$3.15M	$905K	22
20	PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY	$3.15M	$3.15M	$140K	4
21	AMERICAN BANKERS ASSOCIATION	$3.10M	$3.10M	$606K	13
22	APPLE INC	$3.09M	$3.09M	$1.04M	12
23	AMERICAN CHEMISTRY COUNCIL	$3.08M	$3.08M	$390K	6
24	BRISTOL-MYERS SQUIBB COMPANY	$3.05M	$3.05M	$710K	13
25	AMERICA'S HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS INC (AHIP)	$3.01M	$3.01M	$110K	2

Issues by money on reports naming them

One report can name many issues, so these figures overlap and must not be added together.

ISSUE	REPORTS	FILERS	MONEY ON REPORTS NAMING IT (NOT A SPLIT)
Taxation/Internal Revenue Code	2,862	1,240	$553.14M
Budget/Appropriations	5,326	1,517	$475.66M
Trade (domestic/foreign)	2,190	1,001	$421.59M
Health Issues	3,418	1,213	$373.09M
Defense	3,094	953	$312.69M
Energy/Nuclear	1,859	811	$254.35M
Financial Institutions/Investments/Securities	1,232	522	$224.97M
Environment/Superfund	1,154	609	$224.97M
Medicare/Medicaid	1,667	589	$223.44M
Transportation	1,762	745	$219.64M
Labor Issues/Antitrust/Workplace	926	584	$210.49M
Homeland Security	655	403	$162.65M
Science/Technology	988	540	$156.53M
Telecommunications	715	379	$153.75M
Immigration	457	359	$152.32M
Copyright/Patent/Trademark	421	255	$150.25M
Consumer Issues/Safety/Products	530	343	$144.49M
Banking	626	365	$134.20M
Agriculture	1,186	647	$125.61M
Government Issues	824	443	$120.46M

ISSUE	REPORTS	FILERS	MONEY ON REPORTS NAMING IT (NOT A SPLIT)
Education	1,197	590	$118.44M
Housing	631	334	$108.86M
Law Enforcement/Crime/Criminal Justice	459	331	$99.44M
Foreign Relations	481	272	$91.03M
Aviation/Airlines/Airports	534	278	$84.53M

How to read these numbers

One report per engagement

For each registrant, client and quarter, only the most recently posted report counts, so an amendment replaces the report it corrects and is never added to it.

Who is paid

Outside firms are ranked on reported income. Income is the filer's good-faith estimate. Federal law rounds it to the nearest $10,000, though filers do not always follow that, and a report with no income figure usually means under $5,000 and is counted as zero.

Filings set aside

An outside firm reporting $2 million or more from one client in one quarter is far beyond ordinary engagements, so that figure is left out of totals and rankings and listed on this page with a link to the filing. This does not mean the filing is false, only that it needs checking before it can set a ranking.

Who pays

In-house filers report expenses, which can already include fees paid to outside firms. A payer's estimated spend is therefore the larger of its in-house expenses and its outside fees, not their sum. This is our estimate: filings do not state how the two overlap, so the true figure can be higher.

Subcontracts

A client written as “Firm on behalf of Company” is credited to the company. That fee is left out of the company's spend when another firm reports the company directly, since the prime contract should already include it. It still counts as income for the firm that reported it, so firm income totals can exceed payer spend. Where the client is itself a registered lobbying firm and names no end client, the true payer is unknown and no payer is credited.

Issue categories

Filings report one money figure per report, never per issue. Figures shown for an issue are the full amount on every report naming it. They are not a split, and adding them across issues counts the same dollars repeatedly.

Matching names

Clients are matched across firms by exact name after removing punctuation and company suffixes such as Inc or LLC. Related companies stay separate, and differently spelled names of one company may not merge. Lobbyists are listed by their LDA record, so one person can appear more than once.

The score

Each criterion is a percentile against all active entries in that table, and the score is their weighted average across the criteria a row has. It describes scale and reach. It is not a judgment of conduct, quality or effectiveness, and tiers are simply score bands.

PAC money

Political action committee totals come from Federal Election Commission bulk files, for the current two-year cycle rather than the quarter. A PAC is joined to a paying organization only when the PAC's stated connected organization exactly matches its name, so some are missed. Individual donors are not matched to lobbyists, because names alone cannot establish who gave. PAC money and lobbying spend are separate and must not be added together.

House and Senate records

Filers submit once and both chambers publish. Filings are read from LDA.gov and regularly compared with the House Clerk's separate downloads to catch missing records.

Not included

Only activity reportable under the federal Lobbying Disclosure Act appears here. Foreign-agent registrations, unregistered advocacy and state lobbying are outside this data.

Source: Lobbying Disclosure Act filings, retrieved from LDA.gov on 2026-11-03. Senate Office of Public Records cannot vouch for the data or analyses derived from these data after the data have been retrieved from LDA.gov. PAC totals are from the Federal Election Commission; under 52 U.S.C. 30111(a)(4), information copied from FEC reports may not be sold or used to solicit contributions or for commercial purposes.