SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. House Bill 1348

PRINTER NO. 4126

AMOUNT

No Fiscal Impact

FUND

General Fund

DATE INTRODUCED

June 24, 2015

PRIME SPONSOR

Representative Cutler

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF BILL

House Bill 1348 amends Title 65 (Public Officers) to increase the penalties that may be imposed on lobbyists or principals for violations of the law.

This legislation requires a lobbyist, lobbying firm, or a principal to register and file reports with the Department of State (Department) electronically using the computerized system developed by the Department.

This bill increases the maximum administrative penalty that may be imposed by the Ethics Commission (Commission) when it has been determined that a lobbyist or principal has committed an unlawful act under the law. The maximum fine would increase from $2,000 to $4,000.

House Bill 1348 increases the maximum administrative penalty that may be imposed for negligent failure to report under the lobbying disclosure law from $50 per late day to:

- $50 per late day for the first 10 days;
- $100 per late day after the first 10 late days; and
- $200 per late day after the first 20 late days.

The Department would be required to post all filings on its publicly accessible website within seven days of receipt of the filing.

The portions of the bill related to the electronic filing requirements shall take effect January 1, 2017. The remainder of the act shall take effect immediately.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Requiring lobbyists, lobbying firms, and principals to register and file reports electronically should result in administrative cost savings for the Department.

Over the past three calendar years, the Commission has issued an average of 22 fines per year. Assuming the number of fines remains constant in the future, the new fine structure established in this legislation could have a positive impact on the General Find.