

From: [West, Nicole](#)
To: [Jeremy Ayotte](#)
Subject: Public Records Act Request
Date: Monday, October 17, 2022 4:35:28 PM
Attachments: [2022_10_17_PRA_Response_to_J_Ayotte.pdf](#)
[image001.png](#)
[Contact form completion from Jeremy Ayotte.pdf](#)
[Fwd Lobbying Late Fees.pdf](#)
[Lobbyist complaint re Protect Our Wildlife.pdf](#)
[Please contact me .pdf](#)
[Protect Our Wildlife.pdf](#)
[RE Lobbyist complaint re Protect Our Wildlife.pdf](#)
[Response to your letter dated Aug 8th.pdf](#)
[2022_06_29_Opening Letter Protect Our Wildlife.pdf](#)
[2022_07_05_Wildlife_Response.pdf](#)
[2022_08_08_AGO_Follow_Up_Letter--Protect_Our_Wildlife.pdf](#)
[2022_09_08_Closing_Letter - Protect Our Wildlife.pdf](#)

Mr. Ayotte:

Please see the attached correspondence sent on behalf of the Attorney General's Office.

Thank you.

Nicole West | Paralegal
Office of the Attorney General | Civil Division
109 State Street, 3rd Floor
Montpelier, VT 05609-1001



SUSANNE R. YOUNG
ATTORNEY GENERAL

TEL: (802) 828-3171

JOSHUA R. DIAMOND
DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

<http://www.ago.vermont.gov>

SARAH E.B. LONDON
CHIEF ASST. ATTORNEY GENERAL



STATE OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
109 STATE STREET
MONTPELIER, VT
05609-1001

October 17, 2022

Jeremy Ayotte

[REDACTED]

Jeffersonville, VT 05464

VIA E-MAIL: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Ayotte:

Attached please find records responsive to your October 2, 2022, Public Record Act request.

In reviewing all documents responsive to your request, our Office has determined that several documents relating to our investigation into alleged lobbying violations by Protect Our Wildlife ("POW") are exempt from disclosure under Vermont's Public Records Act. *See generally* 1 V.S.A. §§ 317(1)-(43):

More specifically, 1 V.S.A. §§ 317(c)(3) and (4) exempt as protected attorney work product several internal communications and work product exchanged between and amongst assistant attorneys general ("AAG") Gordon Landrigan, Laura Rowntree, Sarah Aceves, Elizabeth Tisher, and Eleanor Spottswood, Deputy Attorney General Joshua Diamond, as well as paralegal Nicole West relating to our investigation of POW. These documents contain the mental impressions, conclusions, opinions, and legal theories of these attorneys and staff, and are summarized as follows:

- **May 18, June 14 & 15, and August 8 & 25, 2022:** Five email communications and email attachments (including draft AGO inquiry letters) from AAG Gordon Landrigan to above listed AAGs and the Deputy Attorney General seeking legal advice regarding lobbying investigation into POW, as well as three other separate lobbying investigations;

- **June 15, 2022:** Three email communications with email attachments from AAG Landrigan to AAG Spottswood providing legal analysis of lobbying disclosure requirements for several parties, including POW;
- **June 21 and August 4, 2022:** Two email communications and email attachment (draft response letter to POW) from AAG Landrigan to paralegal West seeking editing and submission of said attachment;
- **July 23 and August 18, 2022:** Email communications and email attachments from AAG Landrigan to above listed AAGs and paralegal West seeking legal advice regarding lobbying investigation into POW; and
- **August 22, 2022:** One email communication from paralegal West to AAG Landrigan addressing POW's August 19, 2022, email to AGO Elections Complaint email address, one email communication from AAG Landrigan providing legal advice to paralegal West concerning the POW lobbying investigation, and email communications from AAGs Rowntree and Tisher (two emails total) providing legal advice to AAG Landrigan concerning POW lobbying investigation.

If you feel information or records have been withheld in error, you may appeal to Deputy Attorney General Josh Diamond by Monday October 31, 2022. We hope the attached and above information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

/s/ Gordon Landrigan
Gordon Landrigan
Assistant Attorney General

JOSHUA R. DIAMOND
ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL

SARAH E.B. LONDON
CHIEF ASST. ATTORNEY GENERAL



TEL: (802) 828-3171

<http://www.ago.vermont.gov>

**STATE OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
109 STATE STREET
MONTPELIER, VT
05609-1001**

June 29, 2022

Protect Our Wildlife
P.O. Box 3024
Stowe, VT 05672

Re: Protect Our Wildlife Inquiry

To Whom It May Concern:

I write to inform you that the Attorney General's Office has received complaints of a possible violation of Vermont's lobbying laws. A copy of the complaints are enclosed. It alleges that Protect Our Wildlife ("POW") has actively solicited Vermonters to contact their state representatives in support of various Vermont legislative bills concerning or affecting wildlife. Indeed, POW's website (protectourwildlifevt.org/act-now) encourages Vermonters to "[w]rite to your legislators and let them know that wildlife protection is important to you" and provides the names and email addresses of all Vermont legislators. This website also contains a PayPal "Donate to POW" feature.

The following Vermont laws may be implicated by this complaint:

"'Lobby' or 'lobbying' means: . . . solicitation of others to influence legislative action." *See* 2 V.S.A. § 261(9)(B).

"'Lobbyist' means a person who receives or is entitled to receive, either by employment or contract, \$500.00 or more in monetary or in-kind compensation in any calendar year for engaging in lobbying, either personally or through his or her agents, or a person who expends more than \$500.00 on lobbying in any calendar year." *See* 2 V.S.A. § 261(10).

"'Lobbying firm' means a sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, limited liability corporation, or unincorporated association which receives or is entitled to receive \$500.00 or more in monetary or in-kind compensation for engaging in lobbying, either personally or through its agents, in any calendar year and employs more than one individual lobbyist, contracts with at least one other lobbyist, or is affiliated with at least

one other lobbyist.” See 2 V.S.A. § 261(12).

Lobbyists and lobbying firms must register with the Vermont Secretary of State within 48 hours of commencing lobbying activities. 2 V.S.A. §§ 263(a), 264b(a). Lobbyists and lobbying firms must also file regular disclosure reports with the Vermont Secretary of State, detailing lobbying contributions and expenditures. 2 V.S.A. §§ 264, 264b(b).

More information on lobbying is available through the Vermont Secretary of State’s Office, at <https://sos.vermont.gov/elections/lobbying/>.

As you may know, the Attorney General’s Office has a role in the enforcement of Vermont’s lobbying laws. See 2 V.S.A. §§ 267a, 268. Before further review, we would like to give you an opportunity to respond to the complaint. Please provide us with a detailed, written response to the allegations by Friday, July 29, 2022.

In particular, your response should address the following:

1. Has POW received, is it entitled to receive, or has it expended \$500 or more in monetary or in-kind compensation for engaging in lobbying in Vermont in any one calendar year?
2. Has POW registered as a lobbyist or lobbying firm with the Vermont Secretary of State’s Office and made all required disclosure filings? If so, please provide copies of those filings with your answer. If not, please explain why POW has not complied with these requirements.

Please direct your response to me at the above address or by e-mail to AGO.ElectionComplaints@vermont.gov. Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

/s/ Gordon Landrigan
Gordon Landrigan
Assistant Attorney General
Vermont Office of the Attorney General

From: Protect Our Wildlife VT <info@protectourwildlifevt.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 5, 2022 8:45 PM
To: AGO - Election Complaints
Subject: Protect Our Wildlife

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello Mr. Landrigan:

I am writing in response to your letter to us dated June 29th. Protect Our Wildlife, Vermont is a volunteer-run wildlife protection group that is opposed to practices that the complainants lobby in favor of.

The POW representatives, primarily me, who are present at the Statehouse on occasion, sometimes at the invitation of legislators, are uncompensated volunteers, and so it's my understanding that we are not lobbyists and therefore are not required to register with the State. Not one of us is a "person who receives or is entitled to receive, either by employment or contract, \$500.00 or more in monetary or in-kind compensation in any calendar year for engaging in lobbying, either personally or through his or her agents, or a person who expends more than \$500.00 on lobbying in any calendar year." Nor does POW itself meet the definition of a lobbyist because it does not expend \$500 or more on such efforts.

Even though POW does not meet the definition of lobbyist, I do not believe that the web page that you reference in your letter would constitute "lobbying" anyway because POW does not make reference to any specific bills, rulemaking, etc. The definition of lobbying, in relevant part, includes "solicitation of others to influence legislative or administrative action." However, it is my understanding that the definitions of legislative and administrative actions are limited to *specific* actions by a legislator or by an administrative official or body. ("Legislative action" means any action by a legislator with regard to introduction of a bill, resolution, or amendment or with regard to any bill, resolution, amendment, report, appointment, recommendation, nomination, election, proposed or final proposed rule, or other matter proposed for consideration by or pending in the General Assembly or in any committee of the General Assembly; "Administrative action" means any action taken by an administrative official or by any agency, department, division, office, board, or commission of State government with regard to any proposal, drafting, development, or consideration of a policy, practice, or rule. Actions as defined by this section do not include decisions of quasi-judicial boards in contested cases.)

Protect Our Wildlife prides itself on "playing by the rules" in every aspect of its non-profit work for Vermont's voiceless wildlife. The complainants have not pointed to any specific conduct by POW that they believe constitutes us being lobbyists or lobbying firms. The only example provided is an allegation that I met with Rep. Sullivan for breakfast at some point. I don't even know who Representative Sullivan is. It is also important to note that the party who made that claim, Jeremy Ayotte, has been served a cease & desist by POW's legal counsel in response to previous false allegations he made about our organization.

If you have further concerns or questions, please let me know and I will respond promptly. It is important to us that we operate in accordance with the rules. I may be reached by phone at 802-253-1592.

Respectfully,



Brenna Galdenzi
President

Protect Our Wildlife POW

www.ProtectOurWildlifeVT.org

SUSANNE R. YOUNG
ATTORNEY GENERAL

JOSHUA R. DIAMOND
DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

SARAH E.B. LONDON
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STATE OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
109 STATE STREET
MONTPELIER, VT
05609-1001

August 8, 2022

VIA U.S. MAIL & E-MAIL - info@protectourwildlifevt.org

Protect Our Wildlife
P.O. Box 3024
Stowe, VT 05672

Re: Protect Our Wildlife's July 5, 2022, Response to AGO Inquiry

Ms. Galdenzi:

The AGO has reviewed your July 5, 2022, email response to our earlier June 29, 2022, inquiry letter. We appreciate your thoughtful reply.

Our office, however, still seeks basic information about contributions to and expenditures by your volunteer organization. As noted in our earlier letter, POW's website contains a donation page, a PayPal payment button accepting all major credit cards, and also invites employer matching gifts and business donations. Your site also contains a "Legislation/Rulemaking" page that discusses several senate and house bills from the 2022 legislative session, while also highlighting POW's "testimony on legislation."

Given these financial and legislative features of your website, the AGO seeks clarification on the following:

1. Has POW received \$500 or more in monetary or in-kind compensation in any one calendar year?
2. Has POW spent \$500 or more in monetary or in-kind compensation in any one calendar year?

Please provide your responses to these questions by Monday, August 22, 2022.

Please continue to direct your responses to me at the above address or by e-mail to AGO.ElectionComplaints@vermont.gov. Thank you again for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

/s/ Gordon Landrigan _____
Gordon Landrigan
Assistant Attorney General
Vermont Office of the Attorney General

SUSANNE R. YOUNG
ATTORNEY GENERAL

JOSHUA R. DIAMOND
DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

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<http://www.ago.vermont.gov>

STATE OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
109 STATE STREET
MONTPELIER, VT
05609-1001

September 8, 2022

VIA EMAIL – info@protectourwildlifevt.org

Re: Protect Our Wildlife Lobbying

Dear Ms. Galdenzi:

We have reviewed your responses to our June 29 and August 8, 2022, correspondence. At this time, the Vermont Attorney General's Office has determined that no further action is necessary. We are closing this matter.

Additional information about Vermont's lobbying laws is available through the Secretary of State's website at: <https://sos.vermont.gov/elections/lobbying/>. Although the matter is closed, we consider you on notice with respect to the requirements of Vermont's lobbying laws going forward.

We appreciate your cooperation in this matter and hope the above information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

/s/ Gordon Landrigan
Gordon Landrigan
Assistant Attorney General

From: SOS - No Reply
Sent: Friday, April 8, 2022 9:24 AM
To: Winters, Chris; Covey, Eric
Subject: Contact form completion from Jeremy Ayotte

Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

The following information was submitted via the website contact form:

Name:
Jeremy Ayotte

Email:
[REDACTED]

Street address:
[REDACTED]

City/Town:
Jeffersonville

State:
Vermont

Phone:
[REDACTED]

Message:

I'm writing today because I'm greatly concerned about an organization that definitely has a lobbying effect in our state that is not listed as a lobby. Protect our wildlife has spent well over \$500 in a calendar year lobbying or legislative government through Facebook and efforts to have their members reach out to Representatives. They have worked with Representatives such as representative Sullivan through breakfast and so forth and other Representatives. Their efforts to influence laws governing fish and game board the end of trapping and coyote hunting this past year and the money and resources spent to try to achieve their goals is well over the \$500 threshold. They are a lobbyist group and should be held to the standard of a lobbyist group and made to follow the rules.

From: Condos, Jim
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 5:50 PM
To: Senning, Will; Winters, Chris; Bjornlund, Lori
Subject: Fwd: Lobbying Late Fees

Please see this email below...

I actually think he is right and we have discussed before - could we see what it would take?

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Chris Bradley <vtfsc.president@gmail.com>
Date: February 16, 2022 at 5:31:13 PM EST
To: "Condos, Jim" <Jim.Condos@vermont.gov>
Subject: Lobbying Late Fees

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Jim –

Very sorry to hear that you have apparently opted to not run again. I'm a died-in-the-wool "R", but you sir have been a noted exception to my voting record. Thank You.

All that buttering up aside: I must lodge a complaint on the online lobbying system.

I realize just how grave a loss it was to lose Liz; I greatly enjoyed working with her as I discovered and reported "kinks" in the Filing System. Likewise: Lori seems great so this is no complaint against her.

Surely: Any system today that can accept Credit Cards as payment can handle the generation of reminder emails to people who attempt to play by the rules. I now understand that Liz took it upon herself to do this, and Lori has also done this for January but has now apparently too much to do to attend to provide that courtesy, which frankly should already exist in the system. It is almost pointless to put messages on the Dashboard about "reminders"...there is typically only one reason I GO to the Dashboard.

The Federation plays by the rules, when groups like Protect Our Wildlife (POW) DO NOT. We pay to register; we have to track and report expenses like advertising; and we pay a \$25 per day fee of each type of registration we might miss reporting on. You're welcome for my \$100 for being 1 day late for 2 entities and their associated individuals.

When there is ZERO enforcement for those that do not play by the rules, why should the Federation or the VSRPA be penalized by being a day late? And Lori mentions that there have been discussions about raising these fees?

Just how much money does the SoS generate from these late payments, and would it be enough to pay for an upgrade to this "system" so that it could automatically generate reminder emails? It's more than a "filing system", it is a Service as well, yes?

What I am incented to do is to do what I just did. Upon realizing I was a day late for February, I paid my damned \$50 for VTFSC and another \$50 for VSRPA. With myself and the VSRPA, I noted I could now also file March; it's just a pity the system does not allow me to do the whole damn year that way. So I did both for March, for \$0, I could attest that the information was accurate as of today, and I know I can later amend with apparently no repercussions.

Rant off.

Thank You, Very Much, for your service.

Chris

Chris S Bradley
President & Executive Director, Vermont Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs
www.vtfsc.org
(802) 371-8758

From: Winters, Chris
Sent: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 3:46 PM
To: AGO - Election Complaints
Cc: Diamond, Joshua; Condos, Jim
Subject: Lobbyist complaint re: Protect Our Wildlife
Attachments: Contact form completion from Jeremy Ayotte; Fwd: Lobbying Late Fees

Attached you will find two complaints regarding the entity "Protect Our Wildlife." A search of our records does not find them registered as a lobbyist or represented by a lobbying firm. We have received other informal complaints over the years and are aware that they do have an active group and website. We have no way of confirming whether they are required to be registered so are asking that the Attorney General's Office look into the matter.

<https://www.protectourwildlifevt.org/>

Both complainants (Jeremy Ayotte and Chris Bradley) are aware I am forwarding their complaints. Additionally, Mike Covey has made complaints of the same nature, though not in writing. If you would like any background from him his number is [REDACTED] and his email is [REDACTED].

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Chris

Christopher D. Winters
Deputy Secretary of State
802.828.2124
sos.vermont.gov
[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

From: SOS - No Reply
Sent: Friday, April 8, 2022 9:24 AM
To: Winters, Chris; Covey, Eric
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Name:
Jeremy Ayotte

Email:
[REDACTED]

Street address:
[REDACTED]

City/Town:
Jeffersonville

State:
Vermont

Phone:
[REDACTED]

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Rant off.

Thank You, Very Much, for your service.

Chris

Chris S Bradley
President & Executive Director, Vermont Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs
www.vtfsc.org
(802) 371-8758

From: Protect Our Wildlife VT <info@protectourwildlifevt.org>
Sent: Monday, August 8, 2022 11:50 AM
To: Landrigan, Gordon
Subject: Please contact me.
Attachments: 2022 08 08 AGO Follow Up Letter--Protect Our Wildlife.pdf

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Ass't Attorney General Landrigan:

Please contact me at 802-253-1592. We are concerned that your office continues to contact us on the attached matter that we have already explained to your office in detail.

Brenna

Brenna Galdenzi

President

Protect Our Wildlife POW

www.ProtectOurWildlifeVT.org

SUSANNE R. YOUNG
ATTORNEY GENERAL

JOSHUA R. DIAMOND
DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

SARAH E.B. LONDON
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<http://www.ago.vermont.gov>

STATE OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
109 STATE STREET
MONTPELIER, VT
05609-1001

August 8, 2022

VIA U.S. MAIL & E-MAIL - info@protectourwildlifevt.org

Protect Our Wildlife
P.O. Box 3024
Stowe, VT 05672

Re: Protect Our Wildlife's July 5, 2022, Response to AGO Inquiry

Ms. Galdenzi:

The AGO has reviewed your July 5, 2022, email response to our earlier June 29, 2022, inquiry letter. We appreciate your thoughtful reply.

Our office, however, still seeks basic information about contributions to and expenditures by your volunteer organization. As noted in our earlier letter, POW's website contains a donation page, a PayPal payment button accepting all major credit cards, and also invites employer matching gifts and business donations. Your site also contains a "Legislation/Rulemaking" page that discusses several senate and house bills from the 2022 legislative session, while also highlighting POW's "testimony on legislation."

Given these financial and legislative features of your website, the AGO seeks clarification on the following:

1. Has POW received \$500 or more in monetary or in-kind compensation in any one calendar year?
2. Has POW spent \$500 or more in monetary or in-kind compensation in any one calendar year?

Please provide your responses to these questions by Monday, August 22, 2022.

Please continue to direct your responses to me at the above address or by e-mail to AGO.ElectionComplaints@vermont.gov. Thank you again for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

/s/ Gordon Landrigan _____
Gordon Landrigan
Assistant Attorney General
Vermont Office of the Attorney General

From: Protect Our Wildlife VT <info@protectourwildlifevt.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 5, 2022 8:45 PM
To: AGO - Election Complaints
Subject: Protect Our Wildlife

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Hello Mr. Landrigan:

I am writing in response to your letter to us dated June 29th. Protect Our Wildlife, Vermont is a volunteer-run wildlife protection group that is opposed to practices that the complainants lobby in favor of.


The POW representatives, primarily me, who are present at the Statehouse on occasion, sometimes at the invitation of legislators, are uncompensated volunteers, and so it's my understanding that we are not lobbyists and therefore are not required to register with the State. Not one of us is a "person who receives or is entitled to receive, either by employment or contract, \$500.00 or more in monetary or in-kind compensation in any calendar year for engaging in lobbying, either personally or through his or her agents, or a person who expends more than \$500.00 on lobbying in any calendar year." Nor does POW itself meet the definition of a lobbyist because it does not expend \$500 or more on such efforts.

Even though POW does not meet the definition of lobbyist, I do not believe that the web page that you reference in your letter would constitute "lobbying" anyway because POW does not make reference to any specific bills, rulemaking, etc. The definition of lobbying, in relevant part, includes "solicitation of others to influence legislative or administrative action." However, it is my understanding that the definitions of legislative and administrative actions are limited to *specific* actions by a legislator or by an administrative official or body. ("Legislative action" means any action by a legislator with regard to introduction of a bill, resolution, or amendment or with regard to any bill, resolution, amendment, report, appointment, recommendation, nomination, election, proposed or final proposed rule, or other matter proposed for consideration by or pending in the General Assembly or in any committee of the General Assembly; "Administrative action" means any action taken by an administrative official or by any agency, department, division, office, board, or commission of State government with regard to any proposal, drafting, development, or consideration of a policy, practice, or rule. Actions as defined by this section do not include decisions of quasi-judicial boards in contested cases.)

Protect Our Wildlife prides itself on "playing by the rules" in every aspect of its non-profit work for Vermont's voiceless wildlife. The complainants have not pointed to any specific conduct by POW that they believe constitutes us being lobbyists or lobbying firms. The only example provided is an allegation that I met with Rep. Sullivan for breakfast at some point. I don't even know who Representative Sullivan is. It is also important to note that the party who made that claim, Jeremy Ayotte, has been served a cease & desist by POW's legal counsel in response to previous false allegations he made about our organization.

If you have further concerns or questions, please let me know and I will respond promptly. It is important to us that we operate in accordance with the rules. I may be reached by phone at 802-253-1592.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brenna Galdenzi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brenna Galdenzi

President

Protect Our Wildlife POW

www.ProtectOurWildlifeVT.org

From: Winters, Chris
Sent: Thursday, September 1, 2022 8:25 AM
To: AGO - Election Complaints
Cc: Diamond, Joshua; Condos, Jim
Subject: RE: Lobbyist complaint re: Protect Our Wildlife

Hi Folks,

Just checking in on this for an update.

Thanks,

Chris

From: Winters, Chris
Sent: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 3:46 PM
To: AGO - Election Complaints <AGO.ElectionComplaints@vermont.gov>
Cc: Diamond, Joshua <Joshua.Diamond@vermont.gov>; Condos, Jim <jim.condos@vermont.gov>
Subject: Lobbyist complaint re: Protect Our Wildlife

Attached you will find two complaints regarding the entity "Protect Our Wildlife." A search of our records does not find them registered as a lobbyist or represented by a lobbying firm. We have received other informal complaints over the years and are aware that they do have an active group and website. We have no way of confirming whether they are required to be registered so are asking that the Attorney General's Office look into the matter.

<https://www.protectourwildlifevt.org/>

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Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Chris

Christopher D. Winters
Deputy Secretary of State
802.828.2124
sos.vermont.gov
[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

From: Protect Our Wildlife VT <info@protectourwildlifevt.org>
Sent: Friday, August 19, 2022 4:15 PM
To: AGO - Election Complaints
Subject: Response to your letter dated Aug 8th

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear Mr. Landrigan,

I was hoping you might have a moment to talk, but we want to be sure to get this to you prior to the 22nd. On behalf of Protect Our Wildlife this is to respond to your letter of August 8, as follows:

Question: Has POW received \$500 or more in monetary or in-kind compensation in any one calendar year?

Response: POW has received more than \$500 in donations from its supporters in recent calendar years, but those donations do not constitute "compensation" as that term is defined in 2 V.S.A. sec. 261(3) as those donations do not constitute a salary, reward, retainer, or reimbursement received by a "lobbyist." That term is defined in section 261(10) to mean a person who receives or is entitled to receive \$500 or more in monetary or in-kind compensation pursuant to an employment or contractual relationship. POW's supporters' donations are not made pursuant to an employment or contractual relationship.

Question: Has POW spent \$500 or more in monetary or in-kind compensation in any one calendar year?

Response: POW has not spent \$500 or more in monetary or in-kind "compensation," as that term is defined in 2 V.S.A. sec. 261(3), in any one calendar year as none of POW's expenditures are received by a "lobbyist" as that term is defined in 2 V.S.A. sec. 261(3). While I, on POW's behalf, have communicated with legislators and administrative officials regarding legislative and administrative action, I am a totally unpaid volunteer, and thus I'm not a "lobbyist." Likewise, while POW encourages its supporters to communicate with legislators and administrative officials regarding legislative and administrative action, supporters who do so are acting totally on a volunteer basis and therefore are also not "lobbyists."

By way of background, while POW's expenses in recent years have exceeded \$500, the lion's share of our outlays go towards helping communities and towns coexist with wildlife, mainly via the installation of water flow control devices to protect beavers and wetlands. This effort is coupled with educational presentations, paid media, and promotional material to encourage the humane treatment of wildlife and coexistence. We also contribute to our state's wildlife rehabbers through purchasing necessary items including medicine, enclosures, and food.

In closing, while POW certainly engages in advocacy concerning public policy questions, it is a completely voluntary organization that is supported by voluntary donations. Accordingly, there is nothing in 2 V.S.A. chapter 11 that requires POW to register as a lobbyist employer, lobbyist, or lobbying firm, nor am I or any of POW's supporters required to register as lobbyists.

Please let me know if you feel otherwise and, if you do, the legal basis for your position.

Respectfully,
Brenna
802-253-1592

Brenna Galdenzi
President
Protect Our Wildlife POW
www.ProtectOurWildlifeVT.org