



### **Submission to the Public Consultation on the Regulation of Lobbyists**

Chambers Ireland is pleased to make this brief submission to the Oireachtas Committee on the regulation of lobbyists. Chambers Ireland would like to make the following observations:

At the outset it is worth noting that an evidence- based policy making culture that delivers appropriate legislation and regulation is a vital requirement for a modern economy and society. In this context, fair and transparent access to and consultation with all relevant stakeholders to Government and policy-makers is required to ensure a balanced and effective policy debate.

The legitimate representatives of all stakeholders have every right to meet with and brief their political and regulatory stakeholders on the position of their respective stakeholders.

Chambers Ireland makes the following observations concerning the consultation document:

While we agree with other stakeholders on the case for the introduction of a Register of Lobbyists, we suggest that the Register must:

1. Support and encourage engagement between Government and stakeholders
2. Appropriately define the term 'lobbyist' before a register is introduced
3. Promote a sensible balance between transparency and information overload.
4. Ensure that the registry is introduced on a basis that ensures that legitimate representative organisation such as our own are not forced to pay registration fees for representing the legitimate needs and interests of our stakeholders

In conclusion, Chambers Ireland believes that the introduction of an appropriately defined register of lobbyists will only be worthwhile if this registry adds value, is user friendly, and does not seek to capture more information than is necessary. Crucially, we believe that the appropriate regulatory model to be applied for such a registry is as per the transparency register model used by the EU.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: [http://europa.eu/transparency-register/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/transparency-register/index_en.htm)