

## Capitol Weekly's Lobbyist Awards

By Capitol Weekly Staff | 11/12/09 12:00 AM PST

Lobbyists like to talk. Heck, it's what they get paid to do. Their professional powers of persuasion make them an integral part – for better or for worse – of the business of California politics.

With term limits now accelerating the revolving door between the Capitol and the lobbying world, the balance of power has arguably shifted away from elected officials and towards the hired guns. Many of the state's 1,100 or so registered lobbyists are the experts on the myriad, complex issues facing the state.

Since lobbyists are paid to have an opinion, it's not uncommon to find some of them at the Capitol's local watering holes, or tucked into a Capitol hallway, sharing their thoughts on life, the universe and everything. And as you can imagine, they've got their opinions about the 120 members of the Legislature as well. In more candid moments, these opinions are not difficult to extract. Off the record, of course.

This week, Capitol Weekly asked all 120 legislators to turn the tables. We delivered surveys to every Capitol office and put the lobbyists themselves before the voters. We asked lawmakers to give us their picks for the best lobbyists in more than a dozen categories. We've printed the top vote-getters from those surveys on the following page.

Voter turn-out for this particular election was vigorous, but not quite Obama-esque. Some lawmakers demurred from filling out our survey, citing a lack of time, interest or knowledge about the entire lobbying core. But most members and chiefs of staff we spoke to were eager to participate.

Many of the winners will be familiar to some close watchers of California politics, but are probably unknown to many of our readers. In fact, in tallying these surveys, we were surprised at how many lobbyists were unknown to us, but received votes in a number of different categories from the people they are paid to influence.

Like all elections, this is not perfect science. But by and large, we think the results reflect a pretty good summary of some of the state's most effective advocates.

So, without further ado, the envelopes please...

### **BEST LARGE LOBBYING FIRM**

[Lang, Hansen, O'Malley & Miller Governmental Relations Capitol Advocacy](#)

Honorable Mention: Aaron Read and Associates

### **BEST SMALL LOBBYING FIRM**

[McHugh and Associates](#)

Honorable Mention: Aprea and Micheli, Norwood & Associates

### **HARDEST WORKERS**

[Alan Edelstein](#) , *Edelstein, Gilbert, Robson & Smith*  
[Tim Lynch](#) , *Platinum Advisers, LLC*

### **MOST TRUST WORTHY**

[John Norwood](#) , *Norwood & Associates*

Honorable Mention: Doug Kim, Mike Belote

**MOST LIKELY TO WORK ACROSS PARTY LINES**

[Kevin Sloat](#), *Sloat, Higgins, Jensen and Associates*

[Jay Hansen](#), *State Building and Construction Trades Council of California*

Honorable Mention: Tim Coyle, [California Building Industry Association](#)

**BEST CONNECTED**

[Bev Hansen](#), *Lang, Hansen, O'Malley & Miller*

[Darius Anderson](#), *Platinum Advisers, LLC*

Honorable Mention: Aaron Read, Kevin Sloat

**BEST STORYTELLERS**

[Jim Cassie](#), *Capitol Strategies Group, LLC*

[Michael Gunning](#), *Personal Insurance Federation of California*

Honorable Mention: Terry McHale, Mike Flanigan, Paula Treat

**MOST EFFECTIVE LIBERAL CRUSADERS**

[Lenny Goldberg](#), *Lenny Gldberg & Associates*

[Willie Pelote](#), *American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees*

[Barry Broad](#), *Broad & Gusman, LLP*

**MOST EFFECTIVE CONSERVATIVE CRUSADERS**

[Rex Hime](#), *California Business Properties Association*

[Kim Stone](#), *Civil Justice Association of California*

[David Wolfe](#), *Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association*

**FAVORITE LOBBYISTS TO WORK WITH**

[Amy Brown](#), *DiMare, Van Vleck & Brown, LLC*

[Jonathan Ross](#), *KP Public Affairs*

Honorable Mention: Nick Warner, Michael Gunning

**MOST UNDERRATED**

[Randy Pollack](#), *The Law Office of Randy Pollack*

[Jennifer Wada](#), *Wada Williams Group, LLP*

**BIGGEST POLICY WONK**

[Chris Micheli](#), *Aprea & Micheli*

Honorable Mention: Andrew Antwih, Jack Gualco, Steve Rhodes

**RISING STARS:**

[Jennifer Wada](#), *Wada Williams Group, LLP*

[Emily Pappas](#), *Lehman, Levi, Pappas & Sadler*

