



MONDAY

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9:55 p.m.: Tribes spend at least \$480K on DC lobbying in first half of '07

Wisconsin's major Indian tribes collectively spent at least \$480,000 lobbying the federal government during the first half of the year, according to reports filed with the U.S. Senate.

Leading the pack was the Forest County Potawatomi with \$300,000 spent on lobbying.

The Potawatomi shelled out \$100,000 to Barbour Griffith & Rogers, the Washington, D.C.-based namesake law firm of Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour. Barbour was chairman of the Republican National Committee before becoming governor.

His former firm helped protect "tribal interests," according to the vague mid-year lobbying disclosure report filed with the Senate last month. The tribe just hired the firm April 25.

The Potawatomi also retained Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Endreson & Perry. The group, which only deals in Native American interests, has been on retainer with the tribe since 2003.

The Potawatomi paid the group \$20,000 in the first half of 2007 to help it with "disposal of surplus [federal] property to [the] tribal government," according to its disclosure report.

Quinn Gillespie & Associates, which was home to current White House aide and former Republican National Committee Chairman Ed Gillespie, received \$180,000 from the tribe this year to help the Potawatomi with the following: economic development, air quality issues, issues regarding tribal lands that are held in a federal trust, and gaming reform.

The Potawatomi have retained the firm, which Gillespie co-founded with Jack Quinn, former chief of staff to then-Vice President Al Gore, since 2001.

The tribe, which has a casino in Milwaukee, has been fighting efforts by the Menominee to put an off-reservation casino in Kenosha.

The Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin paid Pace LLC \$60,000 through July 31 to help it with health care, gaming and land use issues. The tribe has retained Pace since 1998.

The Oneida also tapped the Zell & Cox law firm in 2006 to help the tribe work with the federal government. The firm received less than \$10,000 from the tribe as of July 31.

The firm's principles are Patricia Zell and Mike Cox. Zell previously served as chief counsel to the Senate Indian Affairs Committee under Chairman Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, while Cox was general counsel to the

National Indian Gaming Commission from 1990 to 1996.

The Oneida also paid Patton Boggs, a top five Washington, D.C, -based firm, less than \$10,000 to help settle land claims.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, which is part of the Interior Department, has come under significant criticism from tribes, Congress and other government watchdog agencies for seriously mismanaging the 55.7 million acres of land held in trust by the federal government for American Indians as well as the Individual Indian Money trust fund.

The long-running dispute has yet to be settled, and federal courts have cited the Interior Department for contempt for failing to adequately account for billions of dollars of trust fund money.

The Ho-Chunk Indian Nation paid Milwaukee-based Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek \$120,000 to work on "economic development." It also paid two other firms less than \$10,000 each for unspecified work.

The Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin did not report spending any money on federal lobbying during the first half of the year.

--By Nicole Duran