



For Immediate Release
February 3, 2004

Contact: Patti Jo Baber
703-960-3011

**Lobbyists Take Exception to Recent Statements by Presidential Candidates
Concerning the Lobbying Profession**

On Monday, February 2nd, the American League of Lobbyists' Board of Directors discussed several public statements made recently by candidates for public office which negatively reflect on the lobbying profession.

While the League does not support candidates, part of the association's mission is a responsibility to promote the professional ethics, reputation and service of government relations professionals engaged in the public policy process. We are concerned that political rhetoric can unfairly characterize government relations professionals, ignoring the positive contribution they make daily to the public policy process.

Accordingly, the Board unanimously passed a position statement which is being sent to the Presidential candidates in the form of a letter. The text of the letter is below and will be posted on our homepage at www.alldc.org.

The text of letter sent to Presidential candidates from American League of Lobbyists' President Deanna Gelak follows:

Dear _____:

Established in 1979, the mission of the American League of Lobbyists is to enhance the development of professionalism, competence and high ethical standards for advocates in the public policy arena and to collectively address challenges which affect the first amendment right to "petition the government for redress of grievances." The American League of Lobbyists promotes ethical lobbying through our Lobbying Code of Ethics (enclosed).

We are writing major candidates for public office in light of several recent public statements which have been made concerning the lobbying profession. The American League of Lobbyists is a non-partisan and diverse organization which does not support political candidates. Part of the association's mission is a responsibility to promote the professional ethics, reputation and service of lobbyists engaged in the public policy process. The American League of Lobbyists is concerned that political rhetoric can unfairly characterize lobbyists, ignoring the positive contribution they make daily to the public policy process.

Lobbying is an essential part of the American political process protected by the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution and one of the major ways that politicians are held accountable to the people. Lobbyists represent all points of view on the major issues that confront the country and the Congress – environment, labor, the elderly, teachers, veterans as well as businesses, to name just a few.

We urge politicians to accurately describe this necessary and essential part of the public policy process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Deanna R. Gelak
President

Enc.: American League of Lobbyists -- Lobbyists Code of Ethics
Lobbyists Reject Portrayal as Villains, February 2, 2004 by Bill Adair, St. Petersburg Times