

Lobbyists for Hire, Inc.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Popular Voices for Hire Inc., the premier for-hire lobbying firm at Harvard Model Congress Asia 2008. Here at Popular Voices we take on **clients** of every stripe and ideology, and represent their financial stakes, political intrigues, and public relations crises in the halls of **Congress** and in the **Oval Office**. We form an elite band of political mercenaries – ready to contract any business, take on any lawmaker, and use any method to persuade or cajole them. In short, you have just joined the **kingmakers** of Washington DC politics. If we didn't lobby for, it probably didn't actually happen.

Lobbying-for-hire is big business in Washington DC. Registered **lobbyists** in Washington have more than doubled in number since 2000 to more than 34,750, while the fees they charge their clients have more than doubled as well. A typical Washington DC lobbyist is an ex-congressman, or an ex-congressional or ex-presidential aide. Of all ex-lawmakers returning to the private sector upon leaving Congress, nearly half now become professional lobbyists – with starting salaries of \$300,000 a year.

At Popular Voices for Hire Inc. we're focused on hard work for concrete results. In the past we've represented big tobacco, big chemicals, and big criminals, as they've all employed us to help them put forward their legitimate cases in the free marketplace of ideas. As a senior lobbyist at the firm, you will be expected to read up on our clients, know well the issue area that interests them, and then to use all your skills of eloquence, charisma, and persuasion to get our clients' **legislation** passed. This year we'll be representing Iranian dissident groups, the American Federation of Teachers, Greenpeace and a host of other environmental groups, and the AFL-CIO – America's largest all-trades labor union. Read on to find about each of these groups and why they've entrusted you to advance their issue.

IRANIAN DISSIDENT GROUPS

We have been contracted by a group of "moderate" Iranian **dissident groups** that do not wish to have their identities disclosed. We can tell you that they are based primarily in America and Europe, although they do maintain undercover operatives in Iran, who will be providing us with up-to-date information as the Model Congress progresses. We



Harvard Model
Congress Asia

Clients—*people willing to pay for a particular service, in this case lobbying; pleasing the clients is the key to successful lobbying*

Congress—*the parliamentary chambers of America's federal government; legislation is debated and passed here*

Oval Office—*the American President's office in the White House; the term is often used to symbolize the entire institution of the Presidency*

Kingmakers—*key influencers of both political and social intrigues; this what all self-respecting lobbyists yearn to be*

Lobbyist—*an individual employed by a firm or organization to influence lawmakers, especially around legislation.*

Legislation—*the term given to proposed and passed pieces of governmental policy, e.g. legislation to raise teacher pay*



can also tell you that they have commissioned us to influence lawmakers on three key points.

The first point is American public perception of Iranian dissident groups. There has been talk recently in Congress of naming several Iranian dissident groups as **terrorist organizations**, as the **State Department** already has with one group, the People's Mujaheddin. The **National Council of Resistance of Iran**, an umbrella organization based in Washington DC tells us that such "terrorist" designations only bolster the hard-line factions in Tehran, while dividing and weakening a pro-freedom and pro-democracy movement that American lawmakers should be supporting.

The second point is that the Iranian people should be free to shape Iranian politics. Supposed democratic elections are currently held in Iran, but their administration is widely seen as farcical, with the conservative **Council of Guardians** rejecting all reformist candidates, prohibiting them to stand for election. As such, our dissident clients tell us, no one in Iran can today freely represent the real wishes of the Iranian people. In fact, the only groups that can are dissident groups outside of Iran, groups like our clients. Lawmakers need to know that the right people to dialogue with are not inside Iran, but rather waiting just down **K Street** here in Washington DC.

The third point is that our clients believe that a **surgical military strike** on Iran, followed by a quick regime change, is preferable to the protracted tyranny that prevails there now. The Iranian people detest their self-appointed leaders, and yearn for American intervention to bring true democracy. America, the land of freedom since its birth, should respond to this calling before even these last voices of democracy in Iran are erased. And to ensure that Iran does not become the next Iraq (which is an absurd thought anyway), America should prepare a **provisional government** before it invades. This provisional government should consist solely of members of foreign Iranian dissident groups, to avoid it being corrupted by remnants of the old regime in Iran.

Bear in mind also that our clients are sensitive to all publicity, so please show the greatest discretion in pursuing this case. The dissidents would rather that people did not know they are employing our lobbying firm. They would also rather that we not reveal to anyone who they are, what they want, or where their money is from.

THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

Founded in 1916, the **American Federation of Teachers** (AFT) has more than 43 state affiliates, and 1.4 million members. It is committed to achieving academic excellence for America's children in a way that also recognizes and rewards America's hard-working teachers. It

Dissident groups—*coalitions of people annoyed at the current leadership or system of government in their country, and acting to reform or overthrow that system*

Terrorist organizations—*groups deemed to be using violence to incite fear for political goals; the State Department keeps a list of such organizations and which groups to include is a political issue*

National Council of Resistance in Iran—*a prominent Iranian dissident group with offices in Washington DC*

State Department—*America's department or ministry of foreign affairs which handles all relations with foreign governments*

Council of Guardians—*an Iranian political institution, dominated by conservative religious clerics, which vets all election candidates*

K Street—*the road in Washington DC where the offices of most lobbying firms, and many of their largest clients, are located*

Surgical military strike—*plan to use limited military force to attack nuclear installations in Iran without a full scale invasion of the country*



represents five broad groups: teachers, school-related personnel, government education employees, higher education faculty, and nurses. Many well-known Americans have been members of the AFT, including John Dewey, Albert Einstein, and Hubert Humphrey. They identify as an **organized labor group**, and try to support the interest of other workers wherever they can.

Several of their positions will be relevant to this Model Congress. The first is that they strongly support increased teacher pay across the board. This pay should be both to reward the excellent work that teachers already do unrecognized in America's public schools, and also to provide an incentive to work harder to fill America's still large educational gaps. However, it would be wrong to try to base incentives off **performance pay** – a system of some teacher higher salaries than others based of the educational improvement of their students, their peer reviews, or other staff evaluation indicators – because performance pay risks harming well-meaning but under-performing American teachers.

The second point is that they strongly oppose **school vouchers**. School vouchers are a public policy initiative to let school kids at failing **public schools** transfer to **private or religious schools** with state funding. The ATF has told us they oppose such plans because: “public funding of private or religious education transfers precious tax dollars from public schools, which are free and open to all children, accountable to parents and taxpayers alike, and essential to our democracy, to private and religious schools that charge for their services.”

The third point is that they want direct teacher involvement in all government education decisions. At the federal level this should mean that teachers unions are consulted in all major decisions, while on a school basis this should mean that teachers are a key part of every decision-making process, not just administrators or parents. More than anything, they want a voice and at Public Voices for Hire Inc. that's our job.

GREENPEACE AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

A coalition of environmental groups led by **Greenpeace USA** has employed us to combat what they view as a global **corporate conspiracy** to defraud the natural environment. Their brief is both proactive and defensive – they want us to push legislation in several areas, but also to be vigilant for efforts by big business to pass anti-environment legislation. Understanding what this coalition agrees on will help you to push its interests and to fight back against its opponents.

Firstly, these groups are concerned about increasing air, land, and water pollution within America. They point to chemical manufacturing plants, coal power plants, and new **factory farms** as some of the

Provisional government—*a government designed to last for a limited period of time, typically only until the next elections* Publicity—*coverage of an issue or group in newspapers, on television news, and in public discourse*

American Federation of Teachers (AFT)—*union of 1.4 million teachers, administrators, and other education and healthcare staff*

Organized labor group—*association bringing together workers, typically with the aims of seeking higher pay, more worker representation, and better working conditions*

Performance pay—*paying some teachers higher salaries than others based on their educational records or staff evaluations*

School vouchers—*a public policy initiative to let school kids at failing private schools transfer to private or religious schools with state funding*

Greenpeace—*one of the world's largest environmental organizations, active in the fight against whaling, the spread of genetically modified organisms, and global warming*



gravest threats to America's environmental health. As solutions they propose stricter curbs on air pollution levels, especially around cities, and closer monitoring of water pollutant levels. They also want to ensure that no government subsidies are given to highly polluting industries, and that no rules on their supervision are relaxed.

Secondly, these groups see America as both responsible for **global warming** related to greenhouse gas emissions, as well as an essential leader in the battle to reduce such emissions. UN data for 2003 showed the US with the highest portion of world **carbon dioxide emissions** at 23 percent (although China may now have higher emissions than the US). Greenpeace says this is an unacceptable breach of America's moral responsibility to the world.

Thirdly, these groups want America to use its moral clout globally to pressure other nations harming the environment. Greenpeace is currently leading the campaign to have America censor the Japanese government for continuing **whaling** in the international waters of the South Pacific Whale Sanctuary. Beyond this, other environmental groups who have employed us want America to provide technical aid to developing nations seeking to modernize in an environmentally friendly manner.

THE AFL-CIO

A coalition of 56 national and local labor unions comprise the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), representing 10.5 million workers. The AFL-CIO points out that its members currently earn 30% more than nonunion workers and are much more likely to have **health and pension benefits**. In this Congress they want to preserve those advantages while working on several issues.

The first of these issues is health insurance. 15.8% of Americans still don't have health insurance and in the event that they fall sick or get injured they receive substandard care or no care at all. The AFL-CIO wants Congress to extend universal healthcare to all American workers. This should be funded both by the government and employers – whose duty it is to provide for their workers – but not be funded by the workers who already confront low wages and high fees for other company programs.

Secondly, the AFL-CIO seeks stronger “right to unionize” and labor protection laws. Some states allow corporations to fire **striking** workers, while others provide few legal protections to “**whistleblowers**” – workers who report malpractice in the workplace. To counter such problems, Congress should make clear that every American worker has the right to join a union and seek its protections.

Public Schools—government run schools typically funded by federal, state, and local taxes; students can usually attend these schools without paying fees or sitting a test

Private or religious schools—provide education for students outside of the state – provided system, typically receiving no funding and little oversight from the government; students pay to attend, and may have to pass admission tests

Corporate conspiracy—corporations colluding to achieve some policy or cause benefit or harm to society

Factory farms—meat and food production systems which rely on feeding corn to confined animals, with environmental costs

Global warming—phenomenon of the world warming likely due to human-produced pollution

Carbon Dioxide Emissions—CO₂ is one of the most potent human pollutants, or “Greenhouse gases” thought to cause global warming



Thirdly, a higher **minimum wage**. Today the minimum wage is just 31% of the average hourly wage for American workers, the lowest level since the end of World War Two. The result is a growing inequality between rich and poor in America, and a large group of minimum wage workers who can't afford to support their families.

SUMMARY

Each of our four clients brings their own policy positions and lobbying preferences to this Congress. When the Congress begins we'll describe more of these to you. In the meantime, we encourage you to visit each group's website, and become familiar with their "**issue stances**" as well as the history and purpose of the group. Our clients expect big things of us. Do Public Voices for Hire Inc. proud!

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Whaling—*the practice of harpooning or otherwise killing whales*

Health and pension benefits—*assurances of health insurance and old-age assistance respectively provided by companies to their workers as part of employment contracts*

Striking—*workers at a specific company or across an industry leaving the workplace in protest at low pay or poor working conditions; strikes typically seek improvements in such conditions and are often organized by labor unions*

Whistleblowers—*workers who report publicly or within the company on abusive practices in the workplace*

Minimum wages—*these state a minimum level of hourly pay that an American worker can receive for his work*

Issue stances—*the policy positions of where groups stand on particular legislation and political issues; typically available on groups' websites*

