

Written evidence from Jon Gerlis (LOB14)

Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee

Lobbying and Influence: post-legislative scrutiny of the Lobbying Act 2014 and related matters inquiry

Many thanks for the opportunity to give evidence to the Committee as part of your inquiry into post-legislative scrutiny of the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act 2014 (“the Lobbying Act”).

As we made clear in our evidence session, it is the CIPR's view that the Act is not fit for purpose. We believe there must be a complete overhaul of the legislation to rebuild trust in our politics and increase transparency and openness in lobbying and the democratic process.

The scope of the Act is too narrow. Its focus on consultant lobbyists and registration should be widened to include in-house lobbyists as is common practice internationally with other registers including the EU, the US and Canada. The legislation creates an uneven playing field within the lobbying industry and it is our view that the register should be a register of lobbying activity, not just a register of consultant lobbyists as defined by the Act.

In addition, we believe the VAT threshold should be scrapped and that there should be a review into the incidental lobbying exemption and the types of communication that require registration. It is also important the list of “who” is lobbied is reviewed and that the statutory requirement to register with ORCL should capture all those who lobby.

In response to specific questions asked of the CIPR's UK Lobbying Register (UKLR), below are some details, as promised;

- Number of UKLR records: 469 (lobbyists and clients) - *please note the UKLR relaunched in mid-2022*
- Organisation type:
 - Agency - 93
 - In House - 56
 - Freelance/Independent – 50
- Non-CIPR members registrants - 158
- Registered on ORCL and UKLR – 17

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