



March 30, 2009

President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

On behalf of the Center for Competitive Politics (CCP), I am writing this letter in regards to your recent memorandum which has severely limited the ability of registered lobbyists to speak with government officials who aid in the disbursement of stimulus funds.

CCP is an educational 501(c)(3) organization that works to protect the First Amendment political rights of speech, assembly, and petition. Our mission is to educate the public and elected officials on the importance of the First Amendment and the role of money in politics.

Your administration's decision to limit communication between experienced and knowledgeable lobbyists on matters vital to Americans represents a step backward from the idea that citizens can "petition the government" to address their concerns. While much has been made of the allegedly corrupting influence of lobbyists, the fact remains that these professional advocates represent the many and often conflicting interests of the American public.

Your policy dramatically limits the influence and input of citizens in the decision- and policy-making process, while limiting the ability of your administration to tap into the knowledge and perspective of the lobbyist community for feedback and information on important issues. Such a policy is clearly contrary to the spirit of the First Amendment.

In light of this, I hope you will reconsider your policy and allow members of your administration to more effectively listen to the many voices of the American public.

Cordially

Sean Parnell
President

Cc: Peter R. Orszag