



Request for Proposal (RFP) for Lobbying Services

American Heart Association (AHA) is requesting proposals to contract with a lobbyist in the state of North Carolina to represent AHA for the 2027 state legislative session. A contract would run approximately from September 15, 2026, through June 30, 2027, with a possibility of renewal. AHA seeks a strong lobbyist with existing relationships in the state legislature, sound knowledge of public health, healthcare, and human services issues, as well as experience in building new relationships on behalf of institutional clients. We also seek individuals and/or teams that have experience in municipal and county government. Additionally, AHA seeks experienced professionals interested in building the organizational footprint in the region's public policy arena and building the skills and knowledge of our grassroots advocates to be public policy advocates.

Scope of Services

Lobbyist shall perform Services and provide Deliverables for AHA including lobbying, consulting, monitoring, environmental scanning, and writing regarding public policies and regulations that align with policy priority areas assigned by the AHA. Services and Deliverables include, but are not limited to:

- i. Lobbying and meeting with legislators:
 - a) Provide direct lobbying services on behalf of the AHA with members of the legislature and other key decision makers (such as appointed officials and members of the administrative cabinet) as approved by AHA. Identify legislative or regulatory support and help target swing votes;
 - b) Testify on behalf of the AHA at agency, state boards or legislative meetings/committee hearings when appropriate, with a preference for utilizing volunteer spokespeople and subject matter experts when adequate notice is available for volunteer preparation;
 - c) In full coordination with AHA staff, identify and recruit bill sponsors for selected legislation;
 - d) Monitor and attend legislative committee meetings, daily legislative sessions, and boards/task forces/study commissions relevant to the AHA's interests;

- e) Enhance the AHA's legislative and executive branch relationships in both political parties by setting up strategic meetings with key decision makers.
- f) Work with state regulatory agencies to implement rules that advance the AHA's policy agenda.
- g) The services provided per this contract will include work related to both defeating preemption of municipalities from passing various AHA policy priorities and proactively pursuing repeal of preemption language in tobacco-related legislative proposals and other legislation as identified by the American Heart Association.
- h) Lobbyists are expected to follow up with appropriate administrative and legislative leadership as assigned by the AHA and report back to the AHA on the outcome of those meetings.
- i) Lobbyists are expected to assist the Government Relations Director in scheduling volunteer meetings for AHA's yearly lobby day, as well as in district meetings outside of session.

ii. Writing and Research:

- a) Assist with the drafting of legislation, amendments and riders on issues of concern to the AHA using model legislation when possible.
- b) Assist AHA with the development of collateral materials, including but not limited to fact sheets, issue papers, media materials and talking points. Preference should be given to collateral already prepared by the AHA.
- c) Write support and opposition letters on legislation as approved by the AHA.
- d) Assist in the development of rules and regulations that advance the AHA's policy agenda.
- e) (Off session) Work with staff to research laws and legislation relating to AHA policy priorities and State and Local Policy Goals.

iii. Monitoring:

- a) Monitor hearing schedules and notify the AHA of relevant hearings immediately.
- b) Monitor bills introduced by the legislature which may be of interest to the AHA and provide position recommendations.
- c) Monitor identified mission related issues in the regulatory and legislative process, providing ongoing consultation on the issues and opportunities.
- d) Monitor and report policy activity at the state and local level including its potential impact on any opportunities related to AHA policy priorities.

iv. Other meetings:

- a) As appropriate, attend meetings held by the AHA dealing with identified mission related policy issues, including those meetings where the AHA will be taking positions, developing a strategic vision or giving updates to key

volunteers. These may include board meetings, state advocacy committee meetings and coalition meetings.

- b) Monitor and attend meetings of regulatory bodies, and work groups/ task forces/ study commissions relevant to the AHA's interests.
- c) (Off session) Attend legislative meetings relative to AHA issues as needed and report back to the AHA staff.

v. Strategic Consulting:

- a) Provide strategic direction and recommendations regarding the policy priorities of the AHA, including consultation on regulatory, legislative, media and grassroots strategies.
- b) Proactively assess the political landscape, both legislative and regulatory, for assigned mission related policy issues and offer strategic suggestions and tactics to enhance AHA impact.
- c) Attend meetings with coalition partners and AHA staff members as requested when the meetings focus on promoting AHA's public policy goals and objectives.
- d) Represent the AHA on health-related issues in meetings with other health professions, government officials, key decision makers, or other individuals deemed appropriate by the AHA.
- e) Provide communications/media strategy when appropriate.
- f) Provide or share any intelligence or other information obtained within the legislative process or external to the legislative process which may have an impact or affect the strategic direction of the campaigns or policies the AHA is pursuing.

vi. Reporting:

- a) Maintain regular communication with AHA staff on priority legislation or other issues of interest. Communication may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. weekly written reports.
 - b. regular electronic communication
 - c. periodic teleconferences.
 - d. Final report outlining actions taken on assigned policy areas, key bills, and detailed analysis of successes and failures will be submitted to AHA within 30 calendar days of the end of the legislative session.
 - e. Alternate formats of reporting may be requested and mutually agreed upon.

Compensation

AHA will be compensating a lobbyist, or firm, on a fixed fee schedule which does not include all expenses included in the services outlines in this RFP. The compensation for a ten (10) month period will not exceed \$35,000. Applicants who embody the broad array

of diversity and lived experiences in our communities are strongly and sincerely encouraged to apply.

Proposal Elements

1. Letter of Interest
2. Names of individual(s) who will be working on the project and their areas of responsibility, including the individual(s) responsible for managing the AHA relationship and communication, administering the contract, and lobbying on behalf of AHA.
3. Experience of the individuals named above, highlighting their previous work, areas of expertise, capacity to fully execute the functions outlined in the proposal.
4. A list of three clients for whom you have lobbied within the past five (5) years and an example of successful efforts managed on their behalf.
 - a. Including the client's name, contact name, email, and phone number.
5. A comprehensive list of all current clients and those served within the preceding 24 months of the submission date.
6. An explanation of your approach to raising the age of sales for nicotine and tobacco products to 21 in the state of North Carolina.
7. An explanation of your approach to ensuring AHA volunteers can meet with at least 5 legislators in district.

Submission of Proposals

Please submit an electronic version of the proposal by Friday, August 14th to:

Tonya Chang, Region Vice President, Field Advocacy, Southeast Region-
tonya.chang@heart.org

Emma Kate Burns, State Government Relations Director, North Carolina-
emmakate.burns@heart.org

Interviews will take place from August 24, 2026, through August 28, 2026. Please direct any questions regarding this RFP to Emma Kate Burns at emmakate.burns@heart.org.