

# Measuring the Lobbying Industry: Lobbying Startups in 2018

By Jorge Uquillas | February 1, 2019 12:37PM ET

About one in 10 lobbying firms had less than a year of federal lobbying activity in 2018.

The 185 firms that disclosed activity for the first time last year — what Bloomberg Government calls lobbying startups — reported a combined \$27.2 million in lobbying revenue for the period from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31.

This look at lobbying startups, which represented 1.7 percent of all lobbying firm revenue in 2018, is part of a series highlighting the different metrics Bloomberg Government uses to assess the performance of firms and the organizations they represent.

## **Top Startup Firms**

**Top 15 Startup Lobbying Firms by Revenue in 2018**

Lobbying firm	Revenue, 2018	Number of clients, Q4 2018	Number of lobbyists, Q4 2018
Husch Blackwell Strategies LP	\$2,963,000	26	9
Vogel Group	1,559,108	9	3
Capitol Hill Policy Group LLC	1,548,000	15	3
Chartwell Strategy Group LLC	1,346,000	18	2
Wynne Health Group LLC	1,194,000	10	3
Interel US Inc.	1,069,000	7	9
Emergent Strategies LLC	1,007,000	11	4
Ferox Strategies LLC	804,000	8	2
InSight Public Affairs Inc.	790,000	—	2
Slaiman Consulting LLC	780,000	4	1
Pataki-Cahill Group	758,000	—	1
Clause Law PLLC	700,000	7	2
Holly Strategies Inc.	628,000	8	1
Butera Israel & Becker PLLC	600,000	11	2
GoldsteinCope Policy Solutions LLC	600,000	2	2

Source: Bloomberg Government analysis of Senate lobbying disclosures  
Note: Data as of Jan. 31



Two of the top startups from last year were the result of mergers. Smaller advocacy practices were combined to create 2018’s largest startup, [Husch Blackwell Strategies LP](#). The firm is a joint venture between Husch Blackwell LLP, Statehouse Strategies LLC, and Cloakroom Advisors LLC.

The fourth-largest lobbying firm startup, [Chartwell Strategy Group LLC](#), is led by Matt Epperly, David Tamasi and Oswaldo Palomo. It was created by the combination of Public Sphere, a firm founded by Palomo in 2016, and Tamasi’s clients, formerly with Rasky Partners Inc.

Most of last year’s startups, however, were the result of a lobbyist departing an established firm to start their own. Gary Slaiman left Morgan Lewis Bockius LLP and launched [Slaiman Consulting LLC](#) (No. 10 on the list), while Robert Odawi Porter and Todd Bertson left Dentons to found [Capitol Hill Policy Group LLC](#) (No. 3).

Three firms were started by former Podesta Group Inc. lobbyists: [Ferox Strategies LLC](#), [Holly Strategies Inc.](#), and [InSight Public Affairs Inc.](#) The churn continued when two of InSight's founders, Oscar Ramirez and Dana Thompson, left to start a new firm called Fulcrum Public Affairs, and took their clients with them along with their clients. By the end of the year, the firm had terminated all its clients.

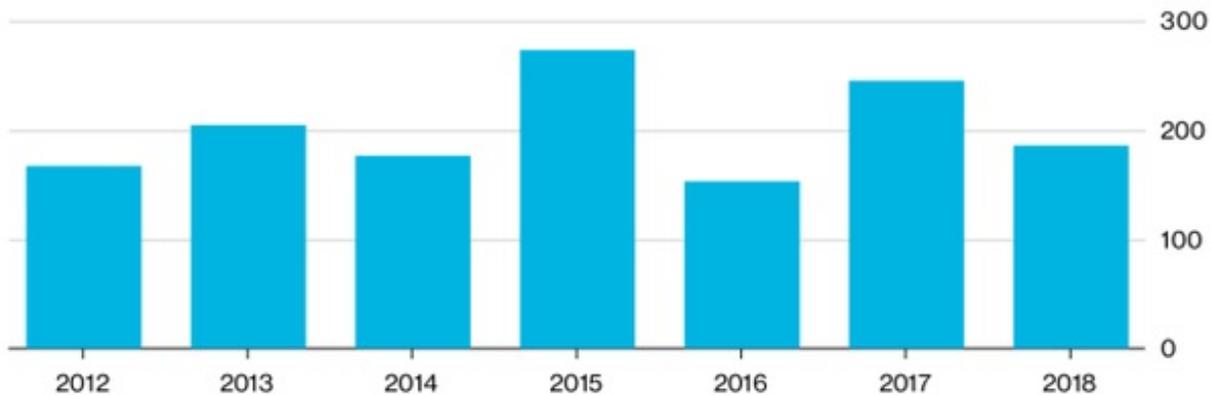
Pataki-Cahill also filed a termination for its last registered client on Jan. 2.

### Decline in Startups

The number of lobbying firm startups declined compared with 2017, when there were 245 new lobbying firms. Among 2017's largest startups were those founded [by lobbyists linked to President Donald Trump's administration](#), and by Podesta Group alums after that firm closed. Former Podesta lobbyists have started at least eight different firms since 2017.

## Fewer Lobbying Startups in Second Session of 115th Congress

Number of firms that started reporting federal lobbying activity, by year



Note: Data as of Jan. 31

Source: Bloomberg Government analysis of Senate lobbying disclosures

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### Read More

The next report will focus on the largest associations and corporations by lobbying spending and number of internal lobbyists in 2018.

Fourth-quarter and full-year activity for every registered lobbying firm and client is available on Bloomberg Government's [lobbying tools](#) home page.

See other coverage of 2018 lobbying activity from Bloomberg Government:

- [Measuring the Lobbying Industry: the Largest Firms of 2018](#)
- [Shutdown-Triggered Bust Could Follow 2018 Lobbying Boom](#)

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