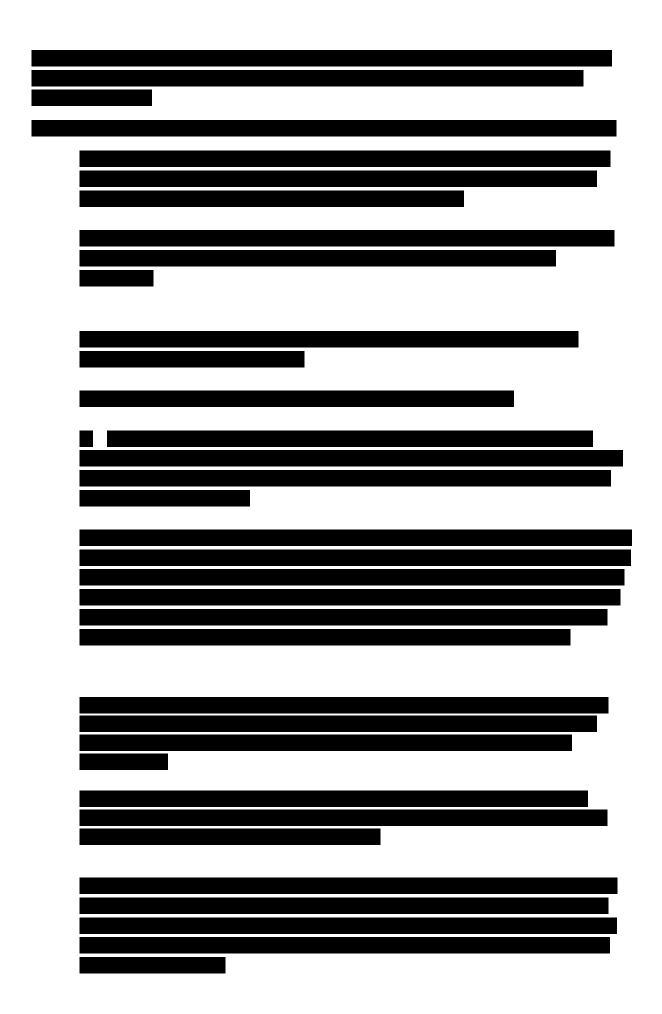
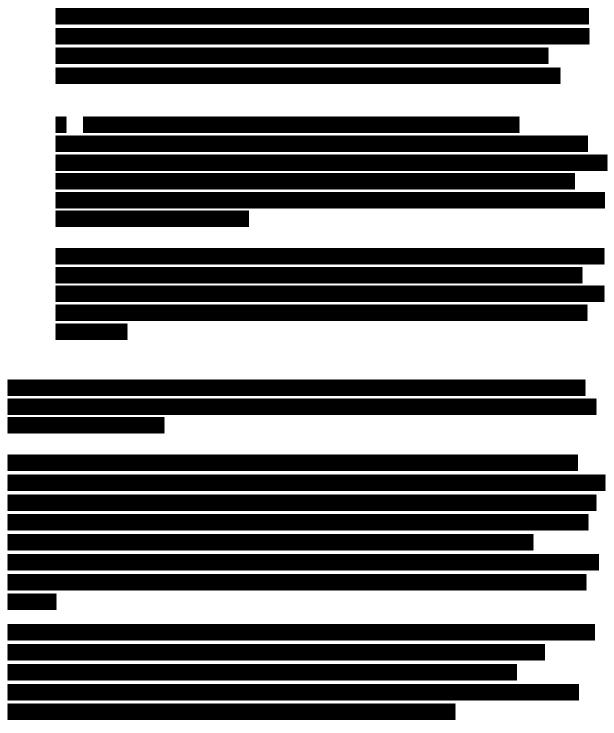
Before I was elected to the Senedd, I was aware that business people pay lobbying firms for access to politicians. I felt this was wrong and I raised lobbying in the Senedd as a newly elected member in 2016.

The former First Minister Carwyn Jones stated that lobbyists had no access to Ministers. From my network of connections, I believed this to be untrue. I therefore requested the diaries of Ministers, so I could join up alleged meetings with lobbyists and Ministers.

Officials refused to publish the diaries of Ministers. I called the official who wrote to me, and they stated that nobody had ever asked for the diaries before.  I was not surprised by this. After some political ping pong, Ministers diaries were published going forward from February 2017. The issue was covered here by BBC Wales:  https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-38830073
From May 2016 to May 2021, I accepted not a single drink, or a single meal from any commercial lobbyist. As a politician that placed me in a tiny minority in Cardiff Bay. Lobbyists gain access to politicians and construct personal relationships through socialising with them. The strength of the relationship dictates how much, if any control can be exercised over the politician.
It is open to debate as to how much can be achieved through such relationships.





Moving on, the revolving door and lobbying is a big problem. There is a merry go round of jobs. Politicians and government officials become lobbyists, lobbyists get jobs with major media outlets and so on. Journalists then get jobs with political parties. There is a whole web of incestuous connections and it is impossible to discern between any of them. The biggest loser is our fledgling and failing Welsh democracy.

As I have said for years, a register of lobbyists is needed. That alone though will not make much difference. The public has a right to know who pays what and for what reason. Everything should be declared, in particular conflicts of interest. Lobbyists should not be allowed to hold political office in political parties and there should be a

cooling off period of at least 5 years on politicians or officials being able to accept roles

Lobbying is a cancer at the heart of Welsh politics, which you well know.

Yours sincerely,

with lobbying firms.

Neil J McEvoy

Leader Propel

\_

Propel Wales is the trading name of Propel Nation Cyf. a not for profit, limited company, without shares, incorporated in Wales and England (company number 11353311). The registered office address is: Suite 7, Homes House, 253 Cowbridge Road West, Cardiff, CF5 5TD.

Propel Cymru yw enw masnachu Propel Nation Cyf. – cwmni cyfyngedig wedi'i ymgorffori yng Nghymru a Lloegr (rhif cwmni 11353311). Cyfeiriad y swyddfa gofrestredig yw: Suite 7, Homes House, 253 Cowbridge Road West, Caerdydd, CF5 5TD.