

## Insiders Strike Back

February 5, 2019

It costs time, not money.

Ron Calzone and others read and consider legislation on their own dime. Calzone's all-volunteer Missouri First group, which analyzes legislation filed in Jefferson City from a constitutional, pro-liberty perspective, doesn't even have a bank account.

A small businessman outside of Rolla, Calzone devotes a great deal of time and energy during the legislative session, traveling to the capitol to speak face to face with Show-Me State public servants.

For some reason, establishment politicians and bureaucrats have generally failed to express gratitude.

*In a free society, citizens must not be required to register and pay a fee in order to speak to legislators.*

Back in 2015, the head of Missouri's "lobbyist guild" filed a complaint, at the urging of two powerful legislators, alleging that Ron Calzone should have to register as a lobbyist. Meaning a \$10 fee and lots of paperwork about the money neither he nor his group spends.



"Average citizens have acted in harmony to stop hundreds of millions of dollars worth of graft that would have otherwise benefited the people who hire herds of professional lobbyists," he responded at the time. "No doubt, it's hard for those lobbyists to explain how average men and women can, with no budget and with no palm greasing, beat them so often!"

With the assistance of the Freedom Center of Missouri, a wonderful public interest litigator, and the Institute for Free Speech, the national leader in protecting political speech, Mr. Calzone has stood tall against the Missouri Ethics Commission.

Last week, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals vacated a 2-1 decision against him, agreeing to have all the circuit's judges weigh in on the case.

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This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.