

## 5 Good Reasons for a Commissioner for the Representation of Interests

The Commissioner for Interest Representation at the German Bundestag

... **upholds the integrity of the political decision-making process.** The representation of general as well as special interests is a basic democratic requirement and protected by constitutional law. The Commissioner watches over the integrity of this process.

... **independently monitors everyone in the political arena who is trying to exert influence on decision-makers.** This occurs regardless of who is the sender as well as if this communication takes place in a public or non-public setting. Dishonest conduct is publicly reprehended by the Commissioner who also informs the Bundestag about the condition of the lobbying sector in general.

... **is solely concerned with form and method of lobbying, not with content.** In doing so he respects both the freedom of opinion and the free mandate of members of parliament. The work of the Commissioner is based on an existing fundamental consensus in regard to the representation of interests. Since this work also serves to further develop this social agreement, no final conclusion about acceptable practices is required a priori.

... **constitutes, among other measures, a noticeable contribution to strengthen the identification of citizens with the democratic system.** The Commissioner creates trust. Citizens do not readily distinguish between politics and lobbying. In addition to this, they also require adequate assessment and classification in light of an information overload resulting from greater transparency. The Office of the Commissioner represents a useful solution for both of these challenges.

... **acts as a counterweight to vague discontent in society.** As an independent contact person the Commissioner offers reliable and credible information about how lobbying operates in reply to obscure suppositions and insinuations.