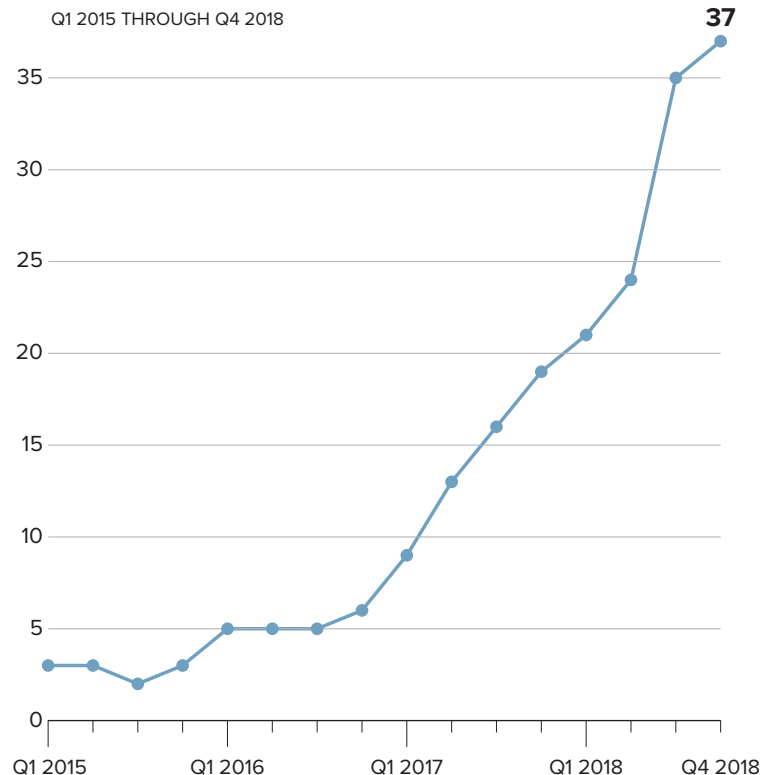Jan. 31, 2019

As 5G Race Heats Up, Federal Lobbying Intensifies

As the United States positions itself to lead the global rollout of 5G — the fifth-generation of wireless technology and standards — technology and telecommunications firms have been ramping up their lobbying spending to speed its implementation ahead of rivals.
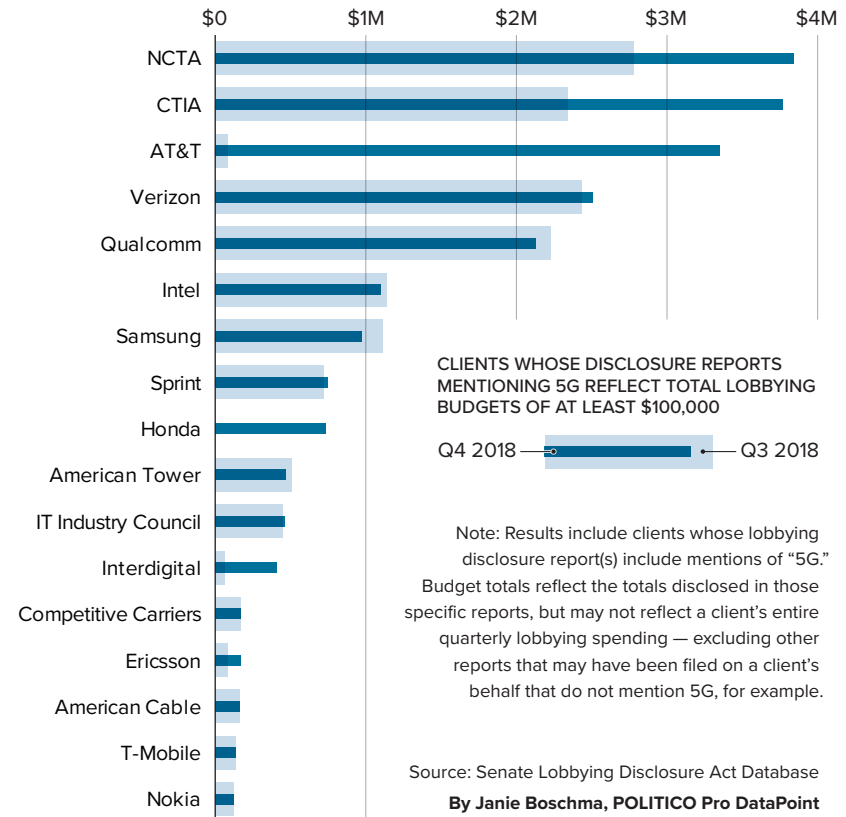
Local governments continued their advocacy in the fourth quarter, including several that have joined suits against the FCC on its order outlining rules for how localities approve small cell wireless technology. Two industry trade groups stepped up their lobbying spending significantly — CTIA, which represents members of the wireless industry, and NCTA, the trade group for broadband and cable companies. Although lobbying disclosure reports do not disaggregate how much each group spends on a particular issue, NCTA's filings mentioning 5G totaled $3.84 million, up from $2.78 million in the third quarter. CTIA's totaled $3.77 million, up from $2.34 million last quarter.

Number of clients lobbying federal offices on 5G issues

Q1 2015 THROUGH Q4 2018

37

The biggest spenders lobbying on 5G in Q4 2018

CLIENTS WHOSE DISCLOSURE REPORTS MENTIONING 5G REFLECT TOTAL LOBBYING BUDGETS OF AT LEAST $100,000

Q4 2018 —○— Q3 2018

Note: Results include clients whose lobbying disclosure report(s) include mentions of "5G." Budget totals reflect the totals disclosed in those specific reports, but may not reflect a client's entire quarterly lobbying spending — excluding other reports that may have been filed on a client's behalf that do not mention 5G, for example.

Source: Senate Lobbying Disclosure Act Database

By Janie Boschma, POLITICO Pro DataPoint

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