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## Crypto Industry Bolsters Influence in Washington

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The cryptocurrency sector is making significant inroads in Washington, with at least 27 companies or advocates registering as lobbyists for the first time this year. These new entrants, spanning some 20 firms, signal a robust push to shape policy in a political climate increasingly receptive to digital assets.

The newcomers hail from diverse corners of the crypto landscape. They include Polymarket, a betting platform leveraging blockchain technology, a gaming firm that launched an NFT-based version of the White House Easter egg hunt, and a Seychelles-based exchange currently barred from the U.S. market due to a federal money laundering settlement. Between April and June, these entities collectively spent nearly £2.2 million lobbying key institutions like the Treasury Department and the Securities and Exchange Commission. Their efforts focused on landmark legislation to promote digital assets and bolster blockchain infrastructure, a technology some envision becoming as integral as the internet itself.

The industry's persistence appears to be yielding results. Last week, President Trump signed the GENIUS Act, a bipartisan bill hailed by crypto advocates as a government endorsement of their sector. The legislation establishes a regulatory framework for stablecoins, cryptocurrencies pegged to assets like the U.S. dollar, providing much-needed clarity for businesses operating in this space.

The House of Representatives also made strides during its much-publicised "crypto week," advancing several significant bills. The week was marked by high-profile lobbying efforts, including vending machines dispensing chocolate bars urging lawmakers to support crypto-friendly policies, an initiative funded by the prominent exchange Coinbase. While these stunts grabbed attention, their costs were not reflected in the second-quarter lobbying disclosures.

In total, at least 73 crypto-focused companies or associations reported federal lobbying activities, spending approximately £8.9 million. This figure excludes contributions from major investment firms like Andreessen Horowitz (£616,000) and BlackRock (£632,000), which, while heavily invested in crypto, also lobbied on broader financial regulation issues.

The surge in lobbying underscores the industry's determination to cement its place in Washington's policymaking circles. As blockchain technology evolves, its advocates are betting on a future where digital assets are not just a niche market but a cornerstone of global finance. For now, their growing influence suggests they are well on their way.