
State Government & Tribal Affairs
Committee

HB 2994

Brief Description: Prohibiting public service announcements by elected officials during reelection campaigns.

Sponsors: Representatives Appleton, Miloscia, Hunt and Darneille.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits state elected officials and municipal elected officials from making public service announcements beginning January 1st of a reelection year through the general election, or until the official is no longer a candidate.

Hearing Date: 1/26/10

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

The State Ethics in Public Service Act (Ethics Act) prohibits employees and officers of the state from engaging in any activity that conflicts with the proper discharge of official duties or using public resources, including state-compensated time and state-owned facilities, for private gain. A "state officer" is defined to include every person holding a position of public trust in or under an executive, legislative, or judicial office of the state.

State law establishes a code of ethics for municipal officers. With certain exceptions, a municipal officer may not be beneficially interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract which is made by, through, or under his or her supervision. A "municipal officer" is broadly defined to include any elected or appointed officer of a local government, district, or municipal corporation, or any deputy or assistant to such officer, and all persons undertaking the exercise of the powers

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or functions of a municipal officer. Most municipalities have adopted a code of ethics that address issues such as conflicts of interest, financial gain, and use of public facilities.

Summary of Bill:

The Ethics Act and the code of ethics for municipal officers are expanded to prohibit state elected officials and elected municipal officers from making public service announcements during the period beginning January 1 of a re-election year and continuing through the general election, or until the official is no longer a candidate. The restrictions do not apply to public service announcements that are part of the regular duties of the officer that only mention or visually display the office or office seal or logo, and do not mention or visually display the name of the elected official in the announcement.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.