

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Olympia, Washington

## Bil Analysis

Bil No E2SSB5931

Requiring electronic filing and publication of  
campaign financial and lobbyist reports.

Brief title

Hearing Date 3/31/99

Senator Patters Horn and Gardner

Sponsor(s)

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State Government Committee

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### BACKGROUND:

State was approved in 1972. Among other provisions, it required candidates to continue to file statements for organizations and make periodic reports on contributions and expenditures required by public officials. Financial statements, required by the Legislature, state agencies, and registrants, and make periodic reports on the expenditures. The public disclosure commission (PDC) was created to receive and file and reports on these provisions.

Legislature enacted in the mid-1990s providing for the electronic filing of reports with the PDC and the electronic reports have been filed during the 1997-1999 biennium, \$378,000 was appropriated to the PDC solely for technology for system improvements.

The date the PDC receives reports and statements is deemed to be the date of electronic filing. The documents sent electronically to the PDC are cancelled and the original documents deposited in the United States mail properly addressed.

### SUMMARY:

A variety of requirements are adopted to encourage in some instances require the electronic filing of reports with the PDC and make reports have been filed with the PDC available electronically.

1. Assistant executive director.

The executive director of the PDC must appoint an assistant executive director for information services who is responsible for maintaining and enhancing the collection and public access to information through electronic means.

## 2. Electronic filings.

By July, 1999 the PDC shall have every candidate, political committee and party organization option of filing financial affairs reports, contribution reports, contribution and expenditure reports electronically. This does not include the basis statement of organizational filing.

By July, 2001 the PDC shall have all lobbyist and lobbyist employers the option of filing their reports with the basis lobbyist registration electronically.

By July, 2000 each continuing political committee required to file its contribution and expenditure reports electronically. This does not include the basis statement of organizational filing. The failure to file electronically is a violation of the PDC laws.

The PDC is required to make the appropriate electronic reports available at the charge to candidates, political committees and party organizations. No provision is made for providing appropriate electronic reports available at the charge to lobbyist and lobbyist employers.

## 3. Website access.

By January 2000 the PDC shall have a website, contract for the operation of a website, allow access to reports and information reports filed by candidates, political committees and lobbyist, but not including the basis lobbyist registration reports. In addition, the PDC shall attempt to make available to the public records submitted to the PDC generated by the PDC available on the website.

## 4. Goals for the electronic availability of information.

Beginning January 2001 the PDC shall establish that all reports and information included reports are filed with the PDC are available electronically on the PDC's website. Reports and information reports are filed electronically shall be available on the PDC's website within two business days of the commission's receipt of the report. Reports and information reports that are submitted in any format that have been filed electronically shall be available on the PDC's website within two business days of the commission's receipt of the report.

## 5. Reports and plans.

The PDC must calculate the following report performance measures and make these measures available to the public by July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year:

- The average number of days elapsing between when reports are received and when copies are available to the general public at the PDC's office and via the PDC's website, distinguishing reports based on whether they were filed by continuing political committees, candidates, independent expenditures, or special reports, were filed by lobbyist and lobbyist employers.

- The percentage of reports filed in different format by candidates in political committees, lobbyists and lobbyist employees in different format as hard copy, electronic diskette, electronic, modems, satellite, electronic Internet, and other formats shall be categorized as state-wide, legislative and local.

By January 2000, the PDC must prepare an information technology plan and submit the plan to various committees of the Senate and House of Representatives, the Governor and the Department of Information Services. The PDC must consult with affected state agencies, the Department of Information Services and stakeholders as consistent with plans or portfolios developed by the Department of Information Services in preparation of the plan. The plan must include:

- A baseline assessment of information technology resources and capabilities as well as the benchmarks for subsequent planning and performance measures;
- A statement of mission goals and objectives for information technology, including goals and objectives for achieving electronic access to records for at least five years;
- An explanation of how mission goals and objectives for information technology support and conform to the state strategy for information technology;
- An implementation strategy to enhance electronic access to public records and information;
- Projects and resources required to meet its objectives;
- If feasible, estimated schedule and funding required to implement identified projects.

The PDC must prepare and submit to the Department of Information Services an annual performance report on information technology. The report shall evaluate performance, assess progress toward implementing information technology, analyze performance measures that relate to the electronic filing reports and time by public access to those reports on its website, describe methods how citizens may interact with the PDC to obtain information and services, and an inventory of PDC information services, equipment and proprietary software.

#### 6. Return of materials.

The PDC must return documents, records, reports, computer files, papers, materials, etc. provided to it as part of audits and investigations within two weeks of receiving the items.

**FISCANOTE:** Not requested.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Ninety days after adjournment of session which it is passed.