

# HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

## SB 6775

**Title:** AN ACT Relating to filing of reports with the public disclosure commission.

**Brief Description:** Simplifying public disclosure report filing and distributions.

**Sponsor:** Senators Patterson and Horn.

### BRIEF SUMMARY

- Excuses the filing of reports with county auditors or elections officers when the reports have been filed with the Public Disclosure Commission electronically, or with a city agency.
- Delays the date by which the Public Disclosure Commission must offer electronic filing to lobbyists.
- Delays the date by which candidates and political committees must file electronically and revises the electronic reporting threshold for candidates and political committees.
- Revises the Public Disclosure Commission's accessibility goals with respect to reports filed electronically and non-electronically.
- Requires the Public Disclosure Commission to establish a toll free telephone number.

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### HOUSE STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

**Staff:** Jim Morishima (786-7191).

#### BACKGROUND:

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) is responsible for collecting and providing public access to reports regarding campaign financing, lobbyist expenditures, and the financial affairs of public officials and candidates.

#### I. Reporting Requirements

A continuing political committee is required to file a report with the PDC and the county auditor or elections officer detailing its activities for the preceding month if the committee made expenditures or received contributions exceeding \$200 that month. Candidates, political committees, and treasurers must file a variety of reports with the PDC and the county auditor or elections officer detailing campaign expenditures, campaign contributions, bank deposits, and other election related activities.

## II. Electronic Filing

The PDC must offer every candidate, public official, political committee, and party organization the opportunity to file financial affairs reports, contribution reports, and expenditure reports electronically by diskette or via modem, satellite, or the internet. By January 1, 2001, the PDC must offer the same electronic filing option to lobbyists and lobbyists' employers.

Beginning January 1, 2001, each continuing political committee that expended \$10,000 or more in the preceding year, or expects to expend \$10,000 or more in the current year must file all contribution and expenditure reports electronically.

The PDC is required to establish certain access goals with respect to information filed electronically. For reports filed electronically, the PDC must attempt to make the reports available in the PDC office within two business days, and on the PDC web site within seven business days of receipt. For reports not filed electronically, the PDC must attempt to make the reports available in the PDC office within four business days, and on the PDC web site within 14 days of physical receipt.

On January 1, 2001, or shortly thereafter, the PDC must revise these goals. For reports filed electronically, the PDC must attempt to make the reports available in the PDC office and on the PDC web site within two business days of receipt. For reports not filed electronically, the PDC must attempt to make the reports available in the PDC office and on the PDC web site within four business days of physical receipt.

### **SUMMARY:**

#### I. Reporting Requirements

After January 1, 2002, a political committee, candidate, treasurer electronically filing a report with the PDC does not have to file the report with the county auditor or elections officer. If a city requires that candidates or committees for city offices file reports with a city agency, a candidate or treasurer so filing need not file the report with the county auditor or elections officer.

#### II. Electronic Filing

The PDC must make available an electronic filing alternative to candidates, public officials, and political committees. The electronic filing alternative must include, but is not limited to filing by diskette, modem, satellite, or the internet. The electronic filing alternative must be available to lobbyists and lobbyists' employers by January 1, 2002.

Beginning January 1, 2002, each candidate or political committee that expended \$25,000 or more in the preceding year, or expects to expend \$25,000 or more in the current year must use the electronic filing alternative. Beginning January 1, 2004, each candidate or political committee that expended \$10,000 or more in the preceding year, or expects to expend \$10,000 or more in the current year must use the electronic filing alternative.

The January 1, 2001 accessibility goals are changed. For reports filed electronically, the PDC must attempt to make the reports available in the PDC office within two business days, and on the PDC web site within four business days of receipt. For reports not filed electronically, the PDC must attempt to make the reports available in the PDC office within four business days, and on the PDC web site within seven business days of physical receipt.

On January 1, 2002, or shortly thereafter, the PDC must again revise the goals. For reports filed electronically, the PDC must attempt to make the reports available in the PDC office and on the PDC web site within two business days of receipt. For reports not filed electronically, the PDC must attempt to make the reports available in the PDC office and on the PDC web site within four business days of physical receipt.

The PDC is required to establish a toll-free telephone number.

**Rulemaking Authority:** No express authority.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date of Bill:** Ninety days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is enacted.