

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6165

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Governmental Operations, January 27, 2014

Title: An act relating to accountability in caucus political committee accounts.

Brief Description: Concerning accountability in caucus political committee accounts.

Sponsors: Senators Hasegawa, Roach and Keiser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Governmental Operations: 1/23/14, 1/27/14 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Hasegawa, Ranking Member; Conway and McCoy.

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) was created by Initiative 276 in 1972. The PDC is empowered to provide timely public access to information about the financing of political campaigns, lobbyist expenditures, and the financial affairs of public officials and candidates, and to ensure compliance with contribution limits and other campaign finance restrictions.

The PDC has a variety of discretionary functions, including the ability to adopt administrative rules such as a code of fair campaign practices, the ability to prepare and publish reports and technical studies promoting the full disclosure of campaign contributions, and the ability to carry out audits and field investigations as the PDC deems appropriate.

The campaign finance regulatory authorities in the following seven states have the authority to investigate or audit political committees, including their receipts and expenditures: California, Connecticut, Kentucky, Maine, North Carolina, North Dakota, and Tennessee. The District of Columbia also provided its campaign finance regulatory body with this authority. In California, such audits are mandatory for committees under certain conditions.

Summary of Bill: The PDC may conduct annual audits or investigations of the expenditures, receipts, debts, and obligations of caucus political committees. Any materials

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obtained from a caucus political committee for use in the audit or investigation of the committee to the committee must be returned within one week of the completion of the audit or investigation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill clarifies what the PDC already has as existing authority.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Hasegawa, prime sponsor.