

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2961

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**As Passed House:**  
February 8, 2018

**Title:** An act relating to election year restrictions on email updates from state legislators.

**Brief Description:** Concerning election year restrictions on email updates from state legislators.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kraft and Hudgins.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

State Government, Elections & Information Technology: 2/2/18 [DP].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 2/8/18, 97-0.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Allows legislators to electronically mail constituents at public expense who either request updates or who are on a distribution list only until the first day of the declaration of candidacy filing period, or during any special legislative session.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, ELECTIONS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Hudgins, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; McDonald, Ranking Minority Member; Kraft, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Gregerson, Irwin and Pellicciotti.

**Staff:** Travis Yonker (786-7383).

**Background:**

Subject to some exceptions, state legislators are restricted from certain activities leading into a legislator's general election. Beginning on December 1 of the year before a general election for a legislator's election, the legislator may not mail, either by regular mail or electronic mail

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(e-mail), to a constituent at public expense a letter, newsletter, brochure, or other piece of literature, except in certain circumstances.

Throughout the legislative session, and special legislative session, and up until the first day of the declaration of candidacy filing period, a legislator may e-mail regular or periodic updates on legislative matters to constituents that have either:

- specifically indicated that they would like to be contacted to receive updates on legislative matters; or
- been added to a distribution list and been provided regular opportunities to unsubscribe from the list.

**Summary of Bill:**

A legislator may only e-mail at public expense regular or periodic updates to constituents that request the updates, or that have been added to a distribution list, only until the first day of the declaration of candidacy filing period, or during any special legislative session.

**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.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This bill takes care of a redundancy in the language of the statute as passed last year. This clarification makes it easier for legislators to comply with the restrictions on e-mailing constituents.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Kraft, prime sponsor; and Representative Hudgins.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.