

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5309

As of February 18, 2019

Title: An act relating to applying campaign contribution limits to candidates for all special purpose districts authorized to provide freight and passenger transfer and terminal facilities.

Brief Description: Applying campaign contribution limits to candidates for all special purpose districts authorized to provide freight and passenger transfer and terminal facilities.

Sponsors: Senators Cleveland, Mullet, Keiser, Palumbo and Kuderer.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections: 2/13/19, 2/15/19.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Applies campaign contribution limits to all port district elections, regardless of district population.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: The Fair Campaign Practices Act, enacted following passage of Initiative 134 in 1992, limits campaign contributions, regulates independent expenditures, restricts the use of public funds for political purposes, and requires public officials to report gifts received in excess of \$50.

State parties and caucus political parties may contribute up to \$1 per registered voter to a port commissioner candidate, while county central committees and legislative district committees combined may contribute up to \$0.50 per registered voter. Individuals, unions, businesses, and other political action committees may contribute up to \$2,000 per election to a port commissioner candidate. These limits are adjusted for inflation by the Public Disclosure Commission every two years.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Campaign contribution limits apply to candidates for port commissioner only if the port district has over 200,000 registered voters. The Port of Seattle and the Port of Tacoma are the two port districts in the state that have over 200,000 registered voters.

Summary of Bill: Campaign contribution limits apply to all port district offices, regardless of the number of registered voters in the district.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This was spurred by a recent race which saw unprecedented levels of campaign spending and contributions. Constituents have asked that we apply the same standard that the larger ports have across the state. Port commissioners endorse this measure.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Annette Cleveland, Prime Sponsor; Eric Johnson, Washington Public Ports Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.