

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2032

As Passed Senate - Amended, February 29, 2024

Title: An act relating to reducing the size of yard signs that are exempt from certain political advertising disclosure requirements.

Brief Description: Reducing the size of yard signs that are exempt from certain political advertising disclosure requirements.

Sponsors: Representatives Cheney, Low, Ramos and Graham.

Brief History: Passed House: 1/25/24, 91-2.

Committee Activity: State Government & Elections: 2/15/24, 2/20/24 [DP, DNP, w/oRec].

Floor Activity: Passed Senate - Amended: 2/29/24, 49-0.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill (As Amended by Senate)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires political yard signs to include the sponsor's name and address.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hunt, Chair; Valdez, Vice Chair; Hasegawa and Kuderer.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Fortunato.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Wilson, J., Ranking Member; Dozier.

Staff: Greg Vogel (786-7413)

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

Background: Under state law, political advertisements for candidates or ballot propositions must include certain disclosures:

- all advertisements must include the name of the sponsor;
- for partisan office candidates, the candidate's party or independent preference must be included;
- if the advertisement is undertaken by someone other than a political party, it must state that no candidate authorized the advertisement, and it must include the name of who paid for it; and
- if the advertisement is sponsored by a political committee, it must include a list of the committee's top five contributors, and if any of those contributors are political committees, a list of the top three donors to the committees must be included.

State law regulates the location, size, and display of such disclosures in visual or print advertisements.

Political advertisement yard signs that are 8 feet by 4 feet in size or smaller are exempt from the requirement to include the name of the sponsor, as well as the the committee's top five contributors and the top three donors to political committees.

Summary of Amended Bill: Political yard signs must include the sponsor's name and address.

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: The commission supports this legislation. We see this as an improvement to transparency, making it easier for people to get sponsor information. This is an area we do get a significant number of questions from the public asking who sponsored yard signs they see out in their community and we have to inform them of the fairly robust exemption that exists currently in law. There's really no reason why yard signs should be exempt from sponsor identification. If you look at the items that are typically exempt it includes items that are so small where putting the information on would be impractical.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Conner Edwards, WA Professional Campaign Treasurer; Sean Flynn, Public Disclosure Commission.

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