

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5857

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
State Government & Elections, January 26, 2024

Title: An act relating to reorganizing statutes on campaign disclosure and contribution.

Brief Description: Reorganizing statutes on campaign disclosure and contribution.

Sponsors: Senators Hunt and Nobles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State Government & Elections: 1/19/24, 1/26/24 [DPS].

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Recodifies and reorganizes provisions related to campaign disclosure and contribution.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5857 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Hunt, Chair; Valdez, Vice Chair; Wilson, J., Ranking Member; Dozier, Fortunato, Hasegawa and Kuderer.

Staff: Greg Vogel (786-7413)

Background: In 1972 Washington's voters approved the state's campaign finance disclosure law, also known as the Fair Campaign Practices Act (Act), to promote disclosure of information regarding the financing of political campaigns and lobbying. These laws govern the state's campaign finance requirements by, among other things, requiring campaign finance reporting and setting contribution limits.

Through the Act, state voters approved creation of the state's Public Disclosure Commission

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.

(Commission). The Commission is charged with providing public access to information about the financing of political campaigns, lobbyist expenditures, and the financial affairs of public officials and candidates. The Commission works to ensure compliance with and enforcement of Washington's disclosure and campaign finance laws.

Summary of Bill (First Substitute): Provisions on campaign disclosure and contribution are recodified and reorganized under a new title, 29B.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE (First Substitute):

- Delays the effective date of the act to January 1, 2026.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2026.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: The Legislature is the steward of the Washington code and therefore, it's appropriate from time to time to improve the code to make sure as the law evolves, it remains flexible and accessible for change. This reorganization would benefit both the understanding and administration of the law. The bill is intended to be technical, and we are not seeking any substantive changes with the law.

CON: If this change were to go through, it would make it more difficult for campaign treasurers to understand what statutes are being referenced in documents.

OTHER: There is not a particularly compelling reason to reorganize these statutes and there is potential for short term confusion. There are higher priorities to consider for campaign finance.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Sam Hunt, Prime Sponsor; Sean Flynn, Public Disclosure Commission; Sam Martin, People Powered Elections Washington.

CON: Conner Edwards, WA Professional Campaign Treasurer.

OTHER: Joe Kunzler.

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