

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SHB 2898

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Regulating distribution of communications by state employees.

**Sponsors:** By House Committee on State Government Operations & Accountability (originally sponsored by Representatives Hunt and Williams).

**House Committee on State Government Operations & Accountability**  
**Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections**

**Background:**

The State Ethics Act prohibits public officials and employees from using, authorizing the use of, or acquiescing in the use of public facilities to assist a candidate or ballot proposition campaign. The term "facilities" includes stationery, postage, machines, equipment, employees, vehicles, office space, publications, and clientele lists.

Some lobbying activities using public funds are allowed. Officers and employees of an agency may communicate with a member of the Legislature, on that member's request, and may communicate to the Legislature requests for legislative action or appropriations that are necessary for the efficient conduct of public business or that are made in the performance of the officers' and employees' official duties. An agency may use public funds to communicate official agency business and to advocate the official position of the agency to any elected official or agency employee.

**Summary:**

State employees may distribute communications from an employee organization or charitable organization to other state employees without violating the State Ethics Act so long as the communications do not support or oppose a ballot proposition or candidate for any public office.

An employee organization is defined as any organization, union, or association in which employees participate and that exists for the purpose of collective bargaining with employers or for the purpose of opposing collective bargaining or certification of a union.

Lobbying activity using public funds, except as already provided for by law, is not authorized.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	97	1
Senate	39	7

**Effective:** June 7, 2006