

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 6522

As Passed Senate, February 14, 2006

Title: An act relating to out-of-state political committees.

Brief Description: Concerning campaign contributions made by out-of-state entities.

Sponsors: Senators Benton, Kastama, Roach, Berkey, Benson, Zarelli, Stevens, Delvin, Honeyford and Schmidt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 1/23/06, 1/26/06 [DP].
Passed Senate: 2/14/06, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kastama, Chair; Berkey, Vice Chair; Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Benton, Fairley, Haugen, Kline, Mulliken and Pridemore.

Staff: Diane Smith (786-7410)

Background: The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) enforces the campaign finance laws for candidates and ballot propositions in state and local elections. Political campaigns must document and report almost all contributions and expenditures in campaign finance reports filed with the PDC at regular intervals.

Summary of Bill: In addition to the name and address, the employer of each contributor to an out-of-state committee must also be disclosed by the out-of-state committee in its report to the PDC. Reporting is required about all contributors of more than \$1,350 in the aggregate, regardless of the contributor's residence or place of doing business. With one exception, the statement making this disclosure must be filed according to the same schedule of reporting that is required for reporting contributions and expenditures and for making special reports for totally in-state campaign activities.

The exception applies to a political committee required to report with the federal election commission if the information in the federal report fulfills state filing requirements and is available to the public on or before the date that the state filing would be required. In that case, the report to the PDC is not required.

All in-state contribution limits apply to all out-of-state organizations that participate in any election within Washington.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: The purpose is not to hinder giving; it is to be as transparent as possible. The FEC has different time lines that could result in federal filings not being public until after the date of the election.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Senator Benton, prime sponsor.