

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2448

As Passed House:

February 1, 2008

Title: An act relating to the time frame covered by the twenty-one day preelection campaign finance reports.

Brief Description: Changing the time frame covered by the twenty-one day preelection campaign finance report.

Sponsors: By Representatives Hunt, Chandler, Appleton, Armstrong and Haigh; by request of Public Disclosure Commission.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Affairs: 1/15/08, 1/22/08 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/1/08, 93-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Changes the time frame covered by the campaign finance report filed with the Public Disclosure Commission 21 days prior to the election to reflect contributions received and expenditures made as of one business day prior to the date of the report.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Appleton, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Kretz, Liias, Miloscia and Ormsby.

Staff: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background:

In Washington, the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) is responsible for receiving, processing, and auditing filings of political campaigns, lobbying and the financial affairs of

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.

elected officials and candidates. The jurisdiction of the PDC includes providing access to those filings, and ensuring compliance with disclosure provisions, contribution limits, campaign practices, and other campaign finance laws.

Candidates running for state office must file personal financial affairs statements and campaign disclosure reports. Local office candidates in jurisdictions of under 1,000 registered voters as of last year's general election have no reporting requirements. Those candidates in jurisdictions of 1,000 or more registered voters as of last year's general election must file financial affairs statements. Local office candidates in jurisdictions of 5,000 or more registered voters, or covering an entire county, must also file campaign disclosure reports.

At certain intervals of a campaign, a candidate or political committee is required to file a report with the PDC and the county auditor or elections officer of the county in which a candidate resides, or the county where the committee maintains its office or headquarters (if a committee has no office or headquarters, then it is the county in which the committee treasurer resides). A report is due on the 21st day and the 7th day immediately preceding the date on which the election is held. In addition, a report is due the 10th day of the first month after the election. Monthly reports are due on the 10th of any other month if the candidate or committee has received a contribution or made an expenditure in the preceding calendar month that exceeds \$200. The report filed 21 days prior to an election must report all contributions received and expenditures made as of the end of the fifth business day before the date of the report.

Summary of Bill:

The report filed 21 days prior to an election must report all contributions received and expenditures made as of one business day, instead of five business days, before the date of the report.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill addresses the C4 report filed with the PDC by candidates, ballot measure committees, political parties and other political committees. The PDC supports the requirement that these reports filed 21 days before the primary and general elections be current within one business day because with vote-by-mail, a large number of voters cast their ballots well before election day. For example, seven days prior to the 2006 election 35 percent of the voters had already returned their ballots in Pierce and Spokane counties. Such

early voters should have the benefit of news stories and blog postings that the more up-to-date information from candidates, political action committees, parties and caucus committees will generate. If this change had been in effect in 2006, the 21-day pre-primary reports would have included an additional \$2.3 million in expenditures, a 35 percent increase, and the pre-general elections would have disclosed an additional \$5 million in expenditures, a 40 percent increase over what was reported.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Vicki Rippie, Public Disclosure Commission.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.