

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1734

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government & Tribal Affairs

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

Brief Description: Recodifying campaign funding and disclosure laws.

Sponsors: House Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs (originally sponsored by Representatives Haigh, Chandler, McDermott, Hunt, Armstrong, Kretz and Ormsby).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Affairs: 1/15/08, 1/22/08 [DP2S].

Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill

- Reorganizes and recodifies Chapter 42.17 RCW.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: The second substitute bill be substituted therefor and the second substitute bill 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: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

Initiative 276, passed by the voters in 1972, established disclosure of campaign finances, lobbyist activities, financial affairs of elective officers and candidates, and access to public records. That initiative also created the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC), a five-member, bi-partisan citizen commission, to enforce the provisions of the campaign finance disclosure law.

Twenty years later, in 1992, the Fair Campaign Practices Act was enacted following passage of Initiative 134. Initiative 134 imposed campaign contribution limits on elections for statewide and legislative office, further regulated independent expenditures, restricted the use

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of public funds for political purposes, and required public officials to report gifts received in excess of \$50.

Initiatives 276 and 134 resulted in three distinct subject areas: (1) disclosure of campaign related activities; (2) disclosure of public records held by public entities; and (3) campaign contribution limits for certain elected offices. The PDC administers disclosure of campaign related activities and campaign contribution limits. The Attorney General has enforcement authority over disclosure of public records held by public entities. However, because of the placement of the statutes, responsibility for enforcement of the public records disclosure statutes was confusing to the public.

In 2005 the Legislature enacted SHB 1133 resulting in a recodification of the public records portion of the Public Disclosure Act into a new chapter, Chapter 42.56 RCW. Also in 2005 the staff of the House State Government Operations and Accountability Committee was directed to reorganize and update the remaining statutes in Chapter 42.17.

Summary of Second Substitute Bill:

The second substitute bill incorporates changes made in Chapter 42.17 RCW as a result of bills passed during the 2007 legislative session. The definition of "person in interest" is moved from Chapter 42.17 RCW to Chapter 42.56 RCW as the term is applicable to the public records statutes. The contribution dollar amounts are updated to reflect the new effective date, and the effective date is changed from July 1, 2008 to July 1, 2009. Technical changes were made to clarify language.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Second Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect July 1, 2009.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The PDC supports the bill. It passed 97-0 last year, but died on the Senate calendar. Several years ago, the public records portion of the chapter was moved to a different chapter. The State Government Committee Chair agreed to have staff undertake the project of reorganizing the chapter. The PDC appreciates your support.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Vickie Rippie, Public Disclosure Commission.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.