
**State Government, Elections &
Information Technology Committee**

HB 1835

Brief Description: Updating inflationary amounts in campaign finance laws.

Sponsors: Representatives Dolan, Jinkins and Doglio; by request of Public Disclosure Commission.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adjusts the monetary threshold for a reportable independent expenditure from \$800 to \$1,000.
- Adjusts the threshold amount for a contribution that must be made by written instrument from \$80 to \$100.

Hearing Date: 2/8/17

Staff: Sean Flynn (786-7124).

Background:

Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure.

Washington's campaign finance and disclosure law was enacted by initiative in 1972. The law requires the disclosure of campaign finances, lobbyist activities, and financial affairs of elective officers and candidates. The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) has the authority to develop procedures, adopt rules, investigate complaints, and impose civil penalties for violations of the law.

The law establishes certain monetary thresholds that trigger some of the reporting requirements. The PDC is authorized by rule to adjust the monetary reporting thresholds within every two-to-five years, based on the inflation index recommended by the Office of Financial Management (OFM).

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.

The PDC also must adjust the contribution limits and certain monetary thresholds every even-numbered year, based on the OFM-recommended inflation index. The monetary adjustments are authorized by rule and apply to the monetary threshold reporting an independent expenditure, contributions made to candidates, certain contributions that must be made by written instrument, and reporting by employers of lobbyists who contribute over certain amounts.

Summary of Bill:

The PDC rulemaking authority for biennially adjusting the monetary reporting thresholds is removed for the threshold amount for a reportable independent expenditure, and the threshold amount of a contribution that must be made by written instrument. The threshold amount for a reportable independent expenditure is changed from \$800 to \$1,000. The threshold amount for a contribution that must be made by written instrument is changed from \$80 to \$100.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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