

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1835

As of February 20, 2018

Title: An act relating to updating inflationary adjustments in campaign finance laws.

Brief Description: Updating inflationary amounts in campaign finance laws.

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

Brief History: Passed House: 2/14/18, 98-0.

Committee Activity: State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections: 2/19/18.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Increases monetary thresholds at which independent expenditures must be reported and campaign contributions must be made by written instrument.
- Removes Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) authority to periodically adjust those thresholds by rule.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: The PDC. The PDC was created by the passage of Initiative 276 in 1972. The PDC is empowered to provide timely public access to information about the financing of political campaigns, lobbyist expenditures, and the financial affairs of public officials and candidates, and to ensure compliance with contribution limits and other campaign finance restrictions.

Inflationary Adjustments. The PDC is authorized by rule to adjust the monetary thresholds that trigger some of the reporting requirements every two to five years based on inflation. The PDC also must adjust the contribution limits and certain monetary thresholds every even-numbered year, based on inflation. The monetary adjustments are authorized by rule and apply to the monetary threshold reporting for an independent expenditure, contributions made by candidates, certain contributions that must be made by written instrument, and reporting by employers of lobbyists who contribute over certain amounts. Currently,

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independent expenditures must be reported to the PDC only if valued at \$800 or greater, and contributions must be made by written instrument only if valued at \$80 or greater.

Summary of Bill: Independent expenditures must be reported to the PDC only if valued at \$1,000 or greater. Contributions must be made by written instrument only if valued at \$100 or greater. The PDC authority for periodically adjusting those thresholds by rule is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Language in statute is clumsy, and this allows the PDC to revisit and increase these amounts less frequently. These are nice round numbers that make sense.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Laurie Dolan, Prime Sponsor; Peter Lavallee, PDC.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.