

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2032

As of February 15, 2024

Title: An act relating to reducing the size of yard signs that are exempt from certain political advertising disclosure requirements.

Brief Description: Reducing the size of yard signs that are exempt from certain political advertising disclosure requirements.

Sponsors: Representatives Cheney, Low, Ramos and Graham.

Brief History: Passed House: 1/25/24, 91-2.

Committee Activity: State Government & Elections: 2/15/24.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Narrows the exemption from requirements to display sponsors and donors on political advertisement yard signs to apply only to signs that are 24 inches by 18 inches or smaller.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS

Staff: Greg Vogel (786-7413)

Background: Under state law, political advertisements for candidates or ballot propositions must include certain disclosures:

- all advertisements must include the name of the sponsor;
- for partisan office candidates, the candidate's party or independent preference must be included;
- if the advertisement is undertaken by someone other than a political party, it must state that no candidate authorized the advertisement, and it must include the name of who paid for it; and
- if the advertisement is sponsored by a political committee, it must include a list of the committee's top five contributors, and if any of those contributors are political

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committees, a list of the top three donors to the committees must be included.

State law regulates the location, size, and display of such disclosures in visual or print advertisements.

Political advertisement yard signs that are 8 feet by 4 feet in size or smaller are exempt from the requirement to include the name of the sponsor, as well as the the committee's top five contributors and the top three donors to political committees.

Summary of Bill: The exemption from disclosure requirements for political advertisement yard signs is narrowed to apply only to signs that are 24 inches by 18 inches or smaller.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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: The commission supports this legislation. We see this as an improvement to transparency, making it easier for people to get sponsor information. This is an area we do get a significant number of questions from the public asking who sponsored yard signs they see out in their community and we have to inform them of the fairly robust exemption that exists currently in law. There's really no reason why yard signs should be exempt from sponsor identification. If you look at the items that are typically exempt it includes items that are so small where putting the information on would be impractical.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Conner Edwards, WA Professional Campaign Treasurer; Sean Flynn, Public Disclosure Commission.

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