

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1884

As Passed House:

March 15, 1999

Title: An act relating to public inspection of books of account maintained by candidates or authorized committees.

Brief Description: Providing appointments to inspect campaign account books.

Sponsors: By House Committee on State Government (Originally sponsored by Representatives Lambert, Ogden, Cairnes and Campbell).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government: 2/19/99, 3/2/99 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/15/99, 64-25.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Limits the time books of account must open to public inspections to a two-hour period eight days prior to a primary or election and by appointment at other times closer to the primary or election.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives McMorris, Republican Co-Chair; Romero, Democratic Co-Chair; Campbell, Republican Vice Chair; Miloscia, Democratic Vice Chair; Haigh; Lambert and D. Schmidt.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Dunshee.

Staff: Steve Lundin (786-7127).

Background:

A candidate, or the treasurer of a candidate's authorized committee, must maintain books of account accurately reflecting all contributions and expenditures on a current basis within five business days of the receipt or expenditure.

However, during the eight days prior to an election or primary, the books of account must be kept current within one business day. During this eight-day period, the books of account must be open for public inspection for at least two consecutive hours, between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays, at the principal headquarters or the address of the treasurer of such other place as authorized by the Public Disclosure Commission. The committee's statement of organization that is filed with the Public Disclosure Commission specifies which consecutive two hours of each day the books of account are open for public inspection.

Summary of Bill:

The requirement for keeping an authorized committee's books of account open for public inspection during the eight-day period prior to an election or primary is altered.

The books of account must be open for public inspection for at least two consecutive hours on the eighth day before the election or primary. If an appointment is made, the books of account must also be open for public inspection to be conducted from 8:00 a.m. through 8:00 p.m. on the seventh day through the day immediately before the election or primary, but not including Saturday, Sunday, or a legal holiday.

It is a violation of the public disclosure laws for a candidate or political committee to refuse to allow an inspection by appointment during the authorized times and days for inspections. The appointment must be allowed at an authorized time and day that is within 24 hours of when the request is made.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: (Original bill) Almost no one comes and checks on books of account. This is a silly rule.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Lambert, prime sponsor, and Melissa Warheit, Public Disclosure Commission.