

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## 2SHB 1734

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Government Operations & Elections, February 25, 2008

**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:** Passed House: 2/01/08, 90-0.

**Committee Activity:** Government Operations & Elections: 2/25/08 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Oemig, Vice Chair; Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Benton, McDermott, Pridemore and Swecker.

**Staff:** Sharon Swanson (786-7447)

**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. The 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 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.

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*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.*

In 2005 the Legislature enacted SHB 1133 resulting in a re-codification 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 and Operations and Accountability Committee was directed to reorganize and update the remaining statutes in Chapter 42.17 RCW.

**Summary of Bill:** Chapter 42.17 RCW is reorganized and language is clarified.

Changes made in Chapter 42.17 RCW as a result of bills passed during the 2007 legislative session are incorporated.

The definition of "person of 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 , and the effective date is changed from July 1, 2008 to July 1, 2009.

Technical changes were made to clarify the language.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on July 1, 2009.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Second Substitute Bill:** PRO: The Public Disclosure Commission supports passage of this bill. The bill reorganizes RCW 42.17 in such a way as to make it more useful and easier to navigate for the general public and others who are not particularly familiar with the current law's arrangement. This revision of the law is clear, logically organized, and cohesive.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Vicki Rippie, Public Disclosure Commission.