

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SB 5150**

**AS PASSED SENATE, FEBRUARY 3, 1992**

**Brief Description:** Adjusting campaign finance reporting requirements.

**SPONSORS:** Senators Nelson and Rasmussen; by request of Public Disclosure Commission.

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE**

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Nelson, Chairman; Thorsness, Vice Chairman; Erwin, L. Kreidler, Madsen, Rasmussen, and A. Smith.

**Staff:** Richard Rodger (786-7461); Lidia Mori (786-7755)

**Hearing Dates:** February 7, 1991; February 13, 1991

**BACKGROUND:**

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) has identified provisions in the campaign finance reporting sections of the Public Disclosure Act that are in need of revision. These changes pertain to the contributor identification thresholds, non-election reporting periods, use restrictions on surplus funds, subtotal reporting of expenditures, earmarked contribution reporting, FAX filings, last-minute publication requirements, and post-election campaign contributions.

Persons who contribute more than \$25 to a political campaign must be identified in the candidate's report to the PDC. The treasurer of a continuing political committee must file a monthly report when the total contributions received since the last filing exceed \$200.

Certain restrictions have been placed on candidates' use of surplus campaign funds. It has been suggested that the restrictions also should apply to the use of funds held by all political committees. Each candidate or political committee who files an expenditure report with the PDC must categorize the expenditures and provide subtotals for each category.

In 1989 the Legislature modified the provisions relating to the reporting of earmarked contributions. It is suggested that these procedures should be clarified.

The PDC is currently required to publish daily summaries of campaign contributions that exceed \$500 and are received within 21 days preceding a general election. There presently exists a ban on the receipt of campaign contributions from any one person that exceeds \$50,000 for a statewide office, or \$5,000 for any other campaign, within 21 days of a general

election. It has been suggested that the prohibition should also be extended to after the election.

The PDC is not presently authorized to accept reports filed by facsimile.

**SUMMARY:**

The campaign finance provisions of the Public Disclosure Act are revised in a number of areas.

The threshold for campaign contributions that may be deposited without identifying the contributor is raised to \$50. Non-election period reports must be filed at the end of any month in which financial activity occurs.

Restrictions on the use of surplus campaign funds applies to all political committees. Expenditure reports no longer require categorizing and subtotals. The procedure for the reporting of earmarked contributions is clarified.

The PDC is not required to publish daily summaries of large last-minute campaign contributions. The ban on the receipt of campaign contributions from any one person that exceeds \$50,000 for a statewide office, or \$5,000 for any other campaign, within 21 days of a general election, is extended until all campaign debts are paid.

The PDC may establish rules authorizing the filing of reports by facsimile.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** none requested

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

These changes are necessary to minimize the burden on campaign treasurers, make technical corrections, and provide for a uniform reporting policy.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** Graham Johnson, Executive Director, PDC (pro)