

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SB 6173**

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS,  
FEBRUARY 5, 1992**

**Brief Description:** Prohibiting the use of public funds to support or oppose ballot propositions.

**SPONSORS:** Senators Nelson, McCaslin, Rasmussen, Oke and Cantu

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS**

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6173 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chairman; Roach, Vice Chairman; Madsen, and Sutherland.

**Staff:** Rod McAulay (786-7754)

**Hearing Dates:** January 30, 1992; February 5, 1992

**BACKGROUND:**

Most local governmental units in the state are members of associations which provide educational and legislative development resources. For example, cities and towns belong to the Association of Washington Cities, and counties and county officials belong to the Washington State Association of Counties and the Washington Association of County Officials. To support the activities of these associations, the members pay dues from their general revenues, i.e. receipts from taxes and fees. Unless created by statute, these associations are treated as private entities and are not subject to audit by the State Auditor. The Auditor also considers the moneys paid by members to such private associations as no longer public, but private funds, once they have been transferred. Private associations representing local governmental units have, from time to time, expended funds in support of or in opposition to ballot measures in the interest of the members.

**SUMMARY:**

A state or local governmental agency may not disburse funds in the form of dues to an entity that uses any portion of the dues for the support of or opposition to a ballot proposition.

**EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:**

It is clarified that bill does not affect payroll deductions for union dues.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** none requested

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

The bill will prevent the use of taxpayers' money to support or oppose ballot propositions.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:**

The bill would prevent a process already approved by State Auditor and Attorney General.

**TESTIFIED:** Senator Nelson, prime sponsor; Gene Tuura; Gary Lowe, WSAC; Sam Kinville, WA State Council of County and City Employees; Richard Welsh