

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Olympia Washington

BilAnalysis

BilNo. HB 1027

Restricting mailings/broadcasts/staff
Brief title

PublicArg:1/22/97

Reps.Schoesler/Chandler/Sheahan
Sponsor

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BACKGROUND:

General restrictions exist prohibiting the use of public facilities to promote a political campaign.

Express restrictions exist on mailings that a legislator may make with public funds during the 12 months period preceding the last day for certifying election results for the legislative election office. During this period a legislator may mail one identical newsletter to constituents later than 30 days after the start of a regular legislative session and one identical newsletter to constituents later than 60 days after the end of a regular legislative session.

However, a legislator may use public funds to mail an individual letter to an individual constituent who has contacted the legislator concerning the subject matter of the letter during his or her current term of office or if the constituent holds a government office with jurisdiction over the subject matter of the letter.

No express restrictions exist on mailings that may be made by other state elected officials but specifically authorize other state elected officials to mail identical newsletters to constituents.

SUMMARY:

Express restrictions are established on the authority of state officials but her than legislators use public funds for mailing letters to constituents or making public service broadcasts during the 12 months period preceding the last day for certifying election results for the legislative election office.

During this period a state official may not use public funds to mail a letter, newsletter, brochure or other piece of literature to constituents, except as follows:

Continued

- o Literature that is mailed as part of the regular duties of the state official may be mailed at public expense, if the literature does not name the state official, but only names his or her office.
- o One identical news letter may be mailed to constituents at public expense no later than 30 days after the start of a regular legislative session and one identical news letter may be mailed to constituents at public expense no later than 60 days after the end of a regular legislative session.
- o An individual letter may be mailed to an individual constituent at public expense if the constituent contacted the official concerning the subject matter of the letter during his or her current term of office or if the constituent holds a governmental office with jurisdiction over the subject matter of the letter.

During this period a state official may not make public service announcements at public expense unless the announcement is part of the regular duties of the official and does not name the state official, but only names his or her office.

FISCAL NOTE: Not requested.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill passed.