

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1960

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**As Reported By House Committee On:**  
Government Administration

**Title:** An act relating to limitations on contributions associated with local government elective offices.

**Brief Description:** Limiting contributions for local offices.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Ogden, Pennington, Lantz, Mielke, Sump, Anderson, Buck and O'Brien.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Government Administration: 3/5/97 [DP].

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives D. Schmidt, Chairman; D. Sommers, Vice Chairman; Scott, Ranking Minority Member; Gardner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Doumit; Dunshee; Murray; Reams; L. Thomas and Wolfe.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Dunn; Smith and Wensman.

**Staff:** Steve Lundin(786-7127).

**Background:** No person or entity may contribute more than \$500 to a candidate for the Legislature for a primary or general election. No person or entity may contribute more than \$1,000 to a candidate for a statewide elected office for a primary or general election.

However, a bona fide political party or caucus political committee may make contributions as follows to such candidates during an election cycle:

- An amount not exceeding 50 cents multiplied by the number of registered voters in the district or jurisdiction from which the candidate is elected, from a caucus political committee or governing body of a state organization; and

- An amount not exceeding 25 cents multiplied by the number of registered voters in the district or jurisdiction from which the candidate is elected, from county central committees or legislative district committees.

The same limitations are placed on contributions to such officials against whom recall charges have been filed and to a political committee having expectations of making expenditures in support of such an official.

Commencing in 1994, these amounts are adjusted for inflation every two years by the Public Disclosure Commission.

**Summary of Bill:** Contributions are limited to candidates for the offices of county executive, county legislative authority, city mayor, city council, port district commissioner, and public utility district (PUD) commissioner that are similar to existing limitations on contributions to candidates for the Legislature and state elected offices. Varying limitations are provided for candidates for these county and city elected positions based upon the population of the county or city. A single limitation on contributions is established for port district and PUD commissioner.

These limitations are as follows:

| <b>Government - pop.</b> | <b>Limit on individual contribs.</b> | <b>Limit on party contribs.</b> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Counties</i>          |                                      |                                 |
| ≥ 1 million              | \$1,000                              | 50 cents per voter              |
| .5 million - < 1 mill.   | \$ 750                               | 40 cents per voter              |
| < .5 million             | \$ 500                               | 30 cents per voter              |
| <i>Cities</i>            |                                      |                                 |
| ≥ .5 million             | \$ 750                               | N.A.                            |
| < .5 million             | \$ 500                               | N.A.                            |
| <i>Port dist.</i>        | \$ 250                               | N.A.                            |
| <i>PUD</i>               | \$ 250                               | N.A.                            |

The same limitations apply to each primary or general election. The same limitations apply to contributions to such officials against whom recall charges have been filed and to a political committee having expectations of making expenditures in support of such an official.

These amounts will be adjusted for inflation every even-numbered year by the Public Disclosure Commission every two years.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** One candidate for PUD commissioner in Clark County spent \$40,000 to get elected, and had one contribution of \$2,500 at the last election. Citizens want this type of campaign reform. Extend limits like we have to local officials.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Representatives Ogden and Pennington, sponsors.