

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Olympia Washington

## Bil Analysis

Bil No. HB 2716

Public employees bullet boards  
Brief title

Hrg Date: 2/3/98

Rep. D. Schmidt / D Sommers  
Sponsor

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### BACKGROUND:

Public facilities may not be used, directly or indirectly, to assist in the campaign of a person for elective public office or to promote or oppose a ballot proposition. Examples of public facilities that may not be used for such purposes include stationary postage machines, and equipment, use of public employees during working hours, vehicles, office space, publications, and client lists of persons served by a public agency.

However, this restriction does not apply to the following uses of local government public facilities:

- o Members of a local elected legislative body may use public facilities to make a collective action at a public meeting expressing their decision or voting on a motion or resolution to support or oppose a ballot proposition if notice of the meeting is given and members of the general public are afforded an approximately equal opportunity to express a view opposing the collective position that is taken.
- o Local elected officials may use public facilities to make a statement in support or in opposition to any ballot proposition if the statement is made at an open press conference made in response to a specific inquiry.
- o Local government public facilities may be used for such purposes if involved in activities that are part of the normal and regular conduct of the officer or agency.

Continued

**SUMMARY:**

The general prohibition using local government public facilities for campaign purposes includes a prohibition the use of public facilities display or post materials containing statements or articles supporting or opposing a campaign to elect a person to public office to promote or oppose a ballot proposition. This includes posting union newsletters, brochures or posters containing such statements or articles in employee bulletin boards located in employee lounges that are off limits to the general public even if the postings are done under a labor agreement between the local government employer and a union or bargaining unit representing public employees.

**FISCAL NOTE:** Not requested.

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