

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2585

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government

Title: An act relating to members of the public disclosure commission.

Brief Description: Restricting political activity by public disclosure commissioners.

Sponsors: Representatives McDermott, Romero, Miloscia, Upthegrove, Schindler and Lysen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government: 1/29/02, 2/8/02 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires members of the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) to be registered voters of the state at the time of selection.
- Expands restrictions on the activities of the members of the PDC. In addition to the existing prohibition on holding or campaigning for elected office, members cannot hold, seek or campaign for appointed office.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Romero, Chair; Miloscia, Vice Chair; McDermott, Schindler, Schmidt and Upthegrove.

Staff: Kimberly Berry (786-7291).

Background:

The PDC was created by Initiative Measure No. 276, the Public Disclosure Act (PDA), in 1972. The PDC provides public access to information about the financing of political campaigns, lobbyist expenditures, and the financial affairs of public officials and candidates. The PDC is also responsible for ensuring compliance with contribution limits and other campaign finance restrictions.

The PDC is composed of five members appointed by the Governor, with the consent of

the Senate. No more than three members can identify with the same political party.

During their tenure, the PDC members are prohibited from participating in the following activities:

- holding or campaigning for elective office;
- serving as an officer of any political party or political committee;
- permitting his or her name to be used in support of or in opposition to a candidate or proposition;
- soliciting or making contributions to a candidate, or in support of or in opposition to any candidate or proposition;
- participating in any way in any election campaign; or
- lobbying, or employing or assisting a lobbyist.

Summary of Bill:

No person may serve on the PDC who is not a registered voter of the state at the time of selection.

The PDC members are prohibited from holding, seeking or campaigning for elective or appointive office.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: People experienced in the political process are needed on the PDC, but they must be removed from current politics and controversies while members. Current law is not restrictive enough. It does not cover seeking appointment to office. The moment a member has that first thought of interest in a public office, it is time to leave the commission.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Jim King, Citizens for Leaders with Ethics and Accountability Now.