

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1130

As Passed House:
February 11, 2005

Title: An act relating to inspection of political candidates' contributions and expenditures.

Brief Description: Eliminating drop-in inspections of campaign accounts.

Sponsors: By Representatives Nixon, Haigh, Kenney and Shabro.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government Operations & Accountability: 1/28/05, 2/2/05 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/11/05, 98-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Removes the requirement that political campaigns keep campaign books open for inspection for at least two consecutive hours on the eighth day prior to an election.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ACCOUNTABILITY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Haigh, Chair; Green, Vice Chair; Nixon, Ranking Minority Member; Clements, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hunt, Miloscia, Schindler and Sump.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

Under the Public Disclosure Act, political committees must maintain books that accurately reflect all contributions and expenditures. The books must be kept current within five business days of a receipt or an expenditure until the last eight days of the campaign, during which time the books must be kept current within one business day of a receipt or an expenditure.

Political committees must keep the books open for public inspection on the eighth day before the election for at least two consecutive hours between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. at the principal headquarters of the campaign, at the address of the treasurer, or at another location authorized by the Public Disclosure Commission. For the week prior to the election, the books must be open for public inspection by appointment between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. at a

location designated by the campaign. Neither the candidate nor the campaign may refuse a request for an appointment, which must be allowed within 24 hours of the date and time requested.

Summary of Bill:

The requirement that a political committee's books be open for inspection for two consecutive hours on the eighth day prior to an election is removed. Instead, for the eight days prior to the election, the books must be available for inspection by appointment.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This bill makes a sensible change in the law. Very few people use the two hour inspection window. Allowing anyone off the street to inspect the books of account with no advanced warning can create a security risk. This bill allows campaign managers to have control over who comes into their homes and when. The bill actually expands the time period when records are available for inspection. The point is availability, not whether the inspection is planned or unplanned.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Nixon, prime sponsor; and Vicki Rippie, Public Disclosure Commission.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.