
**State Government Operations &
Accountability Committee**

SSB 6221

Brief Description: Concerning use of public funds to finance campaigns for local office.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Franklin, Kline, Kastama, Keiser, Regala and Jacobsen).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Allows counties and cities to establish programs allowing the use of public funds for local office campaigns.

Hearing Date: 2/22/06

Staff: Stephanie Toby (786-7106).

Background:

In November of 1992, Washington voters approved Initiative 134 (I-134), a measure that imposed limitations on campaign contributions and expenditures. Initiative 134 prohibited the use of public funds for financing political campaigns for state or local office. Before I-134 took effect, some local governments had programs allowing the use of public funds for campaigns for local office.

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) is charged with enforcing the campaign finance provisions of I-134. The PDC judges enforcement cases brought before them for hearing and possible penalty impositions.

Summary of Bill:

The legislative authority of a city or county may establish a program allowing the use of public funds to finance political campaigns for local office. To do so, the legislative authority must:

- adopt an ordinance or resolution; and
- submit it to a vote of the people by referendum for jurisdictions with referendum power; or
- submit it to a vote of the people by advisory ballot for jurisdictions without referendum power.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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