

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5879

As of January 25, 2006

Title: An act relating to prohibiting out-of-state contributions to ballot measures relating to gambling.

Brief Description: Prohibiting out-of-state contributions to gambling ballot measures.

Sponsors: Senators Prentice, Oke, Haugen, Benson, Franklin, Pridemore, Shin, Rockefeller, Fraser, Hargrove, Stevens and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Staff: Genevieve Pisarski (786-7488)

Background: Washington's campaign finance laws currently prohibit out-of-state campaign contributions in the case of recall elections of state officials. The prohibition applies to corporations, business entities, labor unions with fewer than 10 Washington residents, and political committees that have not received at least \$10 from each of at least 10 Washington voters in the last 180 days.

Although the particular circumstances of a case could affect the outcome, state campaign contribution limits in general will be upheld against challenges based on freedom of speech or freedom of association, if there is adequate evidence that the limitation furthers a sufficiently important state interest, and the limits are narrowly focused. A state's interest in purging corruption and the appearance of corruption from its electoral system, for example, has been found to be a sufficiently important state interest.

Summary of Bill: Persons not registered to vote in Washington and corporations or other entities not doing business in Washington and not subject to the jurisdiction of the Gambling Commission or the Horse Racing Commission who, if they did business in Washington, would have to be licensed by those commissions are prohibited from contributing to a political committee in order to support or oppose a ballot measure concerning regulation of gambling in general, horse racing in particular, or the state lottery.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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