

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## ESB 6152

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As Passed Senate, February 9, 2006

**Title:** An act relating to penalties for violation of chapter 42.17 RCW, the public disclosure and fair campaign practices act.

**Brief Description:** Regarding penalties for violations of the public disclosure act.

**Sponsors:** Senators Kastama and Kline; by request of Public Disclosure Commission.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Government Operations & Elections: 1/23/06, 1/24/06 [DP, DNP, w/oRec], 1/24/06.

Passed Senate: 2/9/06, 45-3.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kastama, Chair; Berkey, Vice Chair; Fairley, Haugen, Kline, McCaslin and Pridemore.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Benton and Mulliken.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Roach, Ranking Minority Member.

**Staff:** Diane Smith (786-7410)

**Background:** The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC), together with the courts, enforces the laws on campaign finance, lobbyist reporting, public officials' financial affairs reporting, public treasurers' reporting, political advertising, and campaign contribution limitations. Violations of these laws can result in the assessment of various fines imposed by the courts or the PDC.

The PDC's authority to assess an individual penalty is limited to \$1,000 and may not exceed a maximum aggregate penalty of \$2,500, regardless of the number of individual violations alleged in a single complaint or hearing.

**Summary of Bill:** The PDC's authority to assess penalties is raised to \$1,700 for a single violation and \$4,200 in the aggregate for multiple violations contained in a single complaint or hearing. These dollar amounts will increase or decrease at the beginning of each even-numbered year in accordance with an inflationary index recommended by the Office of Financial Management.

**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.

**Testimony For:** This is a simplified bill that brings penalty amounts up-to-date and eliminates the need to come before the Legislature to keep the penalties up-to-date.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Commissioner Earl Tilly, Chair of the PDC; Vicki Rippie, PDC.