

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1734

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Government Operations & Elections, March 19, 2007

**Title:** An act relating to reorganizing campaign contribution and disclosure laws.

**Brief Description:** Recodifying campaign funding and disclosure laws.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs (originally sponsored by Representatives Haigh, Chandler, McDermott, Hunt, Armstrong, Kretz and Ormsby).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 2/28/07, 97-0.

**Committee Activity:** Government Operations & Elections: 3/19/07 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Oemig, Vice Chair; Kline and Pridemore.

**Staff:** Sharon Swanson (786-7447)

**Background:** Initiative 276, passed by the voters in 1972, established disclosure of campaign finances, lobbyist activities, financial affairs of elective officers and candidates, and access to public records. That initiative also created the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC), a five-member, bi-partisan citizen commission, to enforce the provisions of the campaign finance disclosure law. In 1992, the Fair Campaign Practices Act was enacted following passage of Initiative 134. That initiative imposed campaign contribution limits on elections for statewide and legislative office, further regulated independent expenditures, restricted the use of public funds for political purposes, and required public officials to report gifts received in excess of \$50.

The initiatives resulted in three distinct subject areas: (1) disclosure of campaign related activities; (2) disclosure of public records held by public entities; and (3) campaign contribution limits for certain elected offices. The PDC administers disclosure of campaign related activities and campaign contribution limits. The Attorney General has enforcement authority over disclosure of public records held by public entities. However, because of the placement of the statutes in code, responsibility for enforcement of the public records disclosure statutes was not clear. In 2005, the Legislature enacted SHB 1133 resulting in recodification of the public records portion of the Public Disclosure Act into a new chapter, Chapter 42.56 RCW. Also in 2005, the staff of the House State Government Operations and Accountability Committee was directed to reorganize and update the remaining statutes in Chapter 42.17.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Summary of Bill:** Chapter 42.17 RCW is reorganized and language is clarified. Obsolete provisions relating to the information technology plan and electronic filing are removed. The provisions repealed in RCW 42.17.131, 42.17.362, 42.17.365, 42.17.375, 42.17.562, 42.17.620, and 42.17.647 have been included in other statutes. Statutes relating to the information technology plan are repealed; however, requirements pertaining to these provisions are duplicated in Chapter 43.105 RCW.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on July 1, 2008.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: The Public Disclosure Commission supports passage of this bill. The bill reorganizes Chapter 42.17 RCW in such a way as to make it more useful and easier to navigate for the general public and others who are not particularly familiar with the current law's arrangement. There are no substantive changes and the intent section of the bill reflects that intention. Any changes that may go beyond those creating uniformity and consistency are unintended.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Vickie Rippie, Public Disclosure Commission.