

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5417

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections, January 26, 2012

Title: An act relating to the distribution of legislators' contact cards, newsletters, government guides, or similar printed materials produced with legislative resources.

Brief Description: Allowing for the distribution of legislators' contact cards, newsletters, government guides, or similar printed materials produced with legislative resources in certain circumstances.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Becker, Swecker, Benton, Stevens, Delvin, Honeyford, Sheldon, Hatfield, Hobbs, Shin, Roach and Kline).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections: 2/10/11, 2/14/11 [DPS]; 1/26/12 [DP2S].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5417 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Pridemore, Chair; Prentice, Vice Chair; Swecker, Ranking Minority Member; Benton, Chase, Nelson and Roach.

Staff: Sharon Swanson (786-7447)

Background: No state officer or state employee may use or authorize the use of facilities of an agency, directly or indirectly, for the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of a person to an office or for the promotion of or opposition to a ballot proposition.

Facilities of an agency include, but are not limited to, use of stationery, postage, machines and equipment, use of state employees of the agency during working hours, vehicles, office space, publications of the agency, and clientele lists of persons served by the agency.

Certain activities are exempt from the general prohibition against the use of facilities of an agency, such as de minimis use incidental to the preparation or delivery of permissible

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communications and activities that are part of the normal and regular conduct of the office or agency.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Second Substitute): The distribution throughout a legislator's district of contact cards, newsletters, government guides, or similar printed materials, produced with legislative resources, at community centers, libraries, senior centers, city halls, and similar civic centers or public sites for the purpose of informing the public as to legislative matters or providing information on how the public may contact legislators or participate in legislative proceedings are not prohibited activities.

Legislators may print or distribute a newsletter or his or her contact information in newspapers that are published or circulated in the legislator's legislative district.

No materials may be prepared or distributed for campaign purposes.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE (Recommended Second Substitute): Adds language to allow a legislator to print or distribute a newsletter and his or her contact information in newspapers that are published or circulated in the legislator's legislative district.

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: None.

Persons Testifying: No one.