

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5988

As of January 15, 2014

Title: An act relating to solicitation and acceptance of campaign contributions.

Brief Description: Restricting the solicitation and acceptance of campaign contributions.

Sponsors: Senators Fain, Hill, Litzow, Becker, Hewitt, Tom, King, Dammeier, Braun, Rivers, Bailey, Schoesler, Brown, Honeyford and O'Ban.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 1/14/14.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Steve Jones (786-7440)

Background: State law restricts the solicitation and acceptance of campaign contributions by state officials during the period the Legislature is in session.

First enacted as part of Initiative 134 in 1992, campaign fundraising was not permitted from 30 days prior to a regular legislative session until 30 days following the session. Campaign fundraising was also not allowed during the period of any special legislative session.

In 2006, the Legislature eliminated the prohibition for the 30-day period following a regular legislative session.

The state budget is adopted by the Legislature on a biennial basis in odd-numbered years, with a supplemental state budget enacted in even-numbered years. Under the state Constitution, regular legislative sessions in odd-numbered years cannot exceed 105 consecutive days, and regular legislative sessions in even-numbered years cannot exceed 60 consecutive days. Special legislative sessions can be convened for periods of up to 30 days.

The state Constitution provides a five-day period—not counting Sundays—during a legislative session for the Governor to consider vetoes of legislation enacted by the Legislature. If a bill is enacted in the last five days of a legislative session, the Governor is provided an additional 20 days following adjournment—not counting Sundays—to consider vetoes.

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: In an odd-numbered year, campaign fundraising is not permitted by any state officials, or persons acting on their behalf, during any period the Legislature is not in session if the Legislature has not submitted to the Governor a biennial budget bill.

The Governor is prohibited from raising campaign funds for any candidate during the period provided by the state Constitution for the consideration of vetoes.

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: PRO: In 2013, the break between the regular and special legislative sessions resulted in substantial campaign fundraising although the Legislature had not yet enacted a state budget. This is probably a result of an oversight in state law. Prohibiting campaign fundraising during this period will likely provide an incentive for the Governor to call a prompt special session to complete the work on the state budget. This is a good government clean-up bill.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Hill, sponsor.