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## State Government Committee

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### HB 1085

**Brief Description:** Requiring lobbying reports to be filed electronically.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Moeller, Gregerson, S. Hunt, Cody, Hudgins and Pollet.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Requires lobbyists, lobbyist employers, and local agencies that lobby to file lobbying reports over the Internet.</li></ul>
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**Hearing Date:** 1/20/15

**Staff:** Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

**Background:**

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) was created and empowered by an initiative of the people to provide timely and meaningful public access to information about the financing of political campaigns, lobbyist expenditures, and the financial affairs of public officials and candidates. The Commission also ensures compliance with contribution limits and other campaign finance restrictions.

Lobbyists and lobbyist employers are required to register with the PDC and report lobbying activities on a monthly basis. Information reported includes such things as the expenditures for lobbying activities, contributions made to candidates and political committees supporting or opposing ballot measures, subject matters being lobbied, and gifts in the form of food and beverage in excess of fifty dollars.

Unless otherwise expressly authorized by law, state and local agencies may use public funds for lobbying, but that lobbying activity is limited to providing information on matters pertaining to official agency business or advocating the official position or interests of the agency to any elected official, officer or employee of any agency. Agencies that expend public funds for lobbying must file quarterly statements to the PDC that include information such as the names,

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titles, job descriptions, and salaries of those who lobbied, a description of the nature of the lobbying, the proportionate amount of time spent on lobbying, and a listing of expenditures incurred for lobbying.

In 1999, electronic filing was made available to candidates, public officials, and political committees for filing financial affairs reports, contribution reports, and expenditure reports. By 2002, it was mandatory. Electronic filing was made available to lobbyists and lobbyist employers for submitting their reports in 2002, although it is not mandatory. Lobbying reports are available on the PDC website, but the format of those reports is not compatible for searching purposes with the current system.

**Summary of Bill:**

As of the effective date of the act, local agencies that lobby must file lobbying reports electronically over the internet. No later than January 1, 2017, all lobbyists and lobbyists' employers must file the required reports electronically over the internet. The PDC is required to design, develop, implement, and maintain computer hardware and software or other applications to accommodate electronic filing of reports that are compatible with its current architecture, technology, and operating systems.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.