

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1547

As of March 12, 2015

Title: An act relating to funding and expenditures for official national association conferences.

Brief Description: Authorizing funding and expenditures for the hosting of the annual conference of the national association of state treasurers.

Sponsors: Representatives S. Hunt, Holy and Condotta; by request of State Treasurer.

Brief History: Passed House: 3/03/15, 96-1.

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Security: 3/12/15.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & SECURITY

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: Gifts Under the Ethics Act Generally. The Ethics Act generally prohibits a state officer or employee from accepting the following in a single year:

- gifts with an aggregate value in excess of \$50 from a single source; or
- a single gift from multiple sources with a value in excess of \$50.

Additionally, a state officer or employee is prohibited from accepting or soliciting any gift that could reasonably be expected to influence the recipient's vote, action, or judgment.

Exemptions Relate to Gifts. The Legislature has adopted a number of exemptions to the general rule. In these circumstances, the \$50 value threshold does not apply and the gift is presumed not to influence the recipient. Examples include the following:

- unsolicited flowers;
- unsolicited tokens or awards of appreciation;
- food and beverage consumed at a hosted reception related to official duties;
- unsolicited gifts from dignitaries from another state or country;
- admission, including food and beverages, to events sponsored by a civic, charitable, governmental, or community organization; and
- gifts solicited on behalf of specified associations in order to host an official conference. These conferences are national legislative associations and the National Lieutenant Governor's Association.

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: The Treasurer and designated employees may solicit gifts for a national conference within the state that has been approved by the Treasurer. In these circumstances, the \$50 value threshold does not apply and the gift is presumed not to influence the recipient.

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: This provides the State Treasurer's Office with comparable authority as the Legislature enjoys to raise money to host national conferences.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Hunt, prime sponsor; Scott Merriman, Office of State Treasurer.