

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5587

As Passed Senate, March 4, 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: Senators Becker and Kohl-Welles; by request of State Treasurer.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Security: 2/16/15, 2/16/15 [DP].
Passed Senate: 3/04/15, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & SECURITY

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Pearson, Vice Chair; Liias, Ranking Minority Member; Habib and McCoy.

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

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

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- 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.

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 Treasurer's Office with the same ability as the Legislature regarding fundraising for national conferences, and support for these opportunities is encouraged. The money received through fundraising will go to host the conference, and will provide a positive economic impact to the area.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Becker, prime sponsor; Scott Merriman, Office of the State Treasurer.