

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2961

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government, Elections & Information Technology

Title: An act relating to election year restrictions on email updates from state legislators.

Brief Description: Concerning election year restrictions on email updates from state legislators.

Sponsors: Representatives Kraft and Hudgins.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government, Elections & Information Technology: 2/2/18 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows legislators to electronically mail constituents at public expense who either request updates or who are on a distribution list only until the first day of the declaration of candidacy filing period, or during any special legislative session.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, ELECTIONS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Hudgins, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; McDonald, Ranking Minority Member; Kraft, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Gregerson, Irwin and Pellicciotti.

Staff: Travis Yonker (786-7383).

Background:

Subject to some exceptions, state legislators are restricted from certain activities leading into a legislator's general election. Beginning on December 1 of the year before a general election for a legislator's election, the legislator may not mail, either by regular mail or electronic mail (e-mail), to a constituent at public expense a letter, newsletter, brochure, or other piece of literature, except in certain circumstances.

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.

Throughout the legislative session, and special legislative session, and up until the first day of the declaration of candidacy filing period, a legislator may e-mail regular or periodic updates on legislative matters to constituents that have either:

- specifically indicated that they would like to be contacted to receive updates on legislative matters; or
 - been added to a distribution list and been provided regular opportunities to unsubscribe from the list.
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Summary of Bill:

A legislator may only e-mail at public expense regular or periodic updates to constituents that request the updates, or that have been added to a distribution list, only until the first day of the declaration of candidacy filing period, or during any special legislative session.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill takes care of a redundancy in the language of the statute as passed last year. This clarification makes it easier for legislators to comply with the restrictions on e-mailing constituents.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Kraft, prime sponsor; and Representative Hudgins.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.