

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 2961

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections, February 21, 2018

**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:** Passed House: 2/08/18, 97-0.

**Committee Activity:** State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections: 2/19/18, 2/21/18 [DP].

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows legislators to e-mail updates to constituents only until the opening of the filing period or during any special legislative session.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hunt, Chair; Kuderer, Vice Chair; Miloscia, Ranking Member; Saldaña and Zeiger.

**Staff:** Samuel Brown (786-7470)

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

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:

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- 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.

**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.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This is a simple fix that will allow legislators to communicate via e-mail all the way through session, allowing us to stay in better communication with our constituents on a constant basis.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Vicki Kraft, Prime Sponsor.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.