

Weekly Legislative Update: **Money in Politics**

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April 12 was the cutoff date for bills to be voted on by the opposite chamber. Some bills are still under consideration if they involve the budget. Bills that have passed out of the opposite chamber need to be signed by leadership in each chamber before being considered passed by the legislature. If amendments were made in the second chamber, the chamber of origin must agree to them before the bill is signed by that chamber's leader. One of our priority bills, [SB 5284](#) **Concerning Campaign Finance Disclosure** passed out of both chambers, with differences that will need to be reconciled. The Senate refused to concur and asked the House to recede from their amendments. Our positions support the Senate version with its ban on foreign-influenced corporations spending or donating to campaigns. [HB 1317](#) **Concerning Grassroots Lobbying Disclosure** passed the legislature - thank you for your support.

Bills Needing Action This Week

No action needed this week.

Please read Bills We Support to see the latest status of other bills.

Detailed instructions are in this week's Legislative Newsletter. Remember, only authorized members can speak for the League; the Issue Chairs will do that, so **please leave the "Organization" box blank. A more powerful influence is many voices speaking for themselves rather than many voices speaking for the League.**

Bills We Support

[HB 1317](#) **Concerning Grassroots Lobbying Disclosure**

Improves transparency in grassroots lobbying disclosure. Requires registration within 24 hours of the initial presentation of a campaign which encourages the public to influence legislation. Requires sponsor identification on advertising and mass communication and

clarifies disclosure requirements of funding sources. (*House passed; yeas, 63; nays, 34; absent, 0; excused, 1, passed out of State Government & Elections to rules 3/24*)

SB 5207 Concerning campaign contributions by controlled entities

Requires contributions made by an individual and an entity that individual controls be aggregated and adds requirements for limited liability corporations to declare a business purpose other than making campaign contributions.

(*Senate passed; yeas, 35; nays, 13; absent, 0; excused, 1, on House floor calendar with several amendments*) This bill did not move out of the House by the April 12 deadline so will likely see no more action this session.

SB 5284 Concerning Campaign Finance Disclosure

Updates campaign reporting deadlines to ensure voters have access to campaign financing information when ballots arrive. Requires sponsors to identify political ads to vendors when order is placed. The Senate policy committee removed two sections: Improving transparency in grassroots lobbying disclosure and authorizing the PDC to use the public disclosure transparency account for project-based expenditures to meet increasing demand for technology and reporting improvements. We testified in support of this to ensure sufficient funding for the successful and timely completion of these projects.

The Senate floor amendment that prohibited contributions from or expenditures by foreign-influenced corporations (FIC) was removed from the bill by the House SF & TR committee. We support the Senate version of the bill banning foreign-influenced corporations from participating in our election campaigns. (*Senate passed; yeas, 29; nays, 19; absent, 0; excused, 1, with amendment banning foreign influence corporation (FIC) donations and expenditures 2/15, House passed 97 yeas, 1 excused without the FIC amendment 4/7*).

The House version amended the bill to set a threshold for foreign national certifications (see HB 1330 below). **The Senate refused to concur and asked the House to recede from their amendments on April 13.**

Bills We Are Watching

HB 1330 Adjusting the threshold for candidate contribution certifications related to foreign nationals

House passed 95-0-3, referred to Senate State Government 3/1) Threshold language amended into 5284 when passed by the House on 4/7.

SB 5152 Defining synthetic media and providing relief for candidates and campaigns

Senate passed; 35 yays 13 nays, 13; absent, 0; excused, 1, House passed 67 yays 67, nays 30, 1 excused with amendments. Senate concurred in House amendments. Passed final passage 32 yeas, 14 nays, 3 excused.

Bills With No More Action This Session

We were disappointed this bill was not scheduled for a hearing and are working with the [People Powered Elections](#) coalition to request a work session this year. We look forward to this priority bill progressing in 2024.

[HB 1755](#) Establishing the democracy voucher program for contributions to state legislative candidates. This will create a public financing system for legislative elections using a statewide Democracy Voucher Program, similar to the Seattle Democracy Voucher Program. It will provide four \$25 vouchers to constituents in each LD to give to participating candidates of their choice. This will strengthen the voice of everyday people in state government by promoting broad, diverse, fair, and undistorted citizen influence and participation in electoral politics. Requires limits on election spending, demonstrated public support, and participation in public debates for those opting in to run for office using Democracy Vouchers.

[HB 1426](#) Concerning campaign contributions by controlled entities

Requires contributions made by an individual and an entity that individual controls be aggregated and adds requirements for limited liability corporations to declare a business purpose other than making campaign contributions.

(House State Gov't & Tribal Relations: public hearing 1/27, Exec 2/1, referred to Rules - see companion bill 5207)

[HB 1677](#) Concerning Campaign Finance Disclosure

Updates campaign reporting deadlines to ensure voters have access to campaign financing information when ballots arrive. Requires sponsors to identify political ads to vendors when order is placed. Authorizes the PDC to use the public disclosure transparency account for project-based expenditures to meet increasing demand for technology and reporting improvements. *(House State Gov't & Tribal Relations: public hearing 2/8, referred to appropriations 2/17, no action taken before fiscal cut off - see SB 5284)*

How You Can Be Involved

- Local Leagues in Washington have action chairs who coordinate action teams. Some local Leagues have democracy teams to take action locally. Contact your local League action chair to find out and join.

- Volunteer to help with research. Do you like numbers and data-mining? Join us as we use the excellent tools provided by the <https://www.pdc.wa.gov/political-disclosure-reporting-data> to dig deep into the data.
- You may also express your opinion on legislation with the LWVWA issue chairs. We will take your perspectives into consideration as we determine our support for legislation and prepare testimony. Contact: Cindy Madigan, Elections Issue Chair, cmadigan@lwwa.org.