

Session Wrap-Up: Money in Politics

Issue Team Chair: Cindy Madigan

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April 30, 2023

The Legislature adjourned at 10:30 pm., Sunday 4/23/23. One of our priority bills, [HB 1317](#) **Concerning Grassroots Lobbying Disclosure** passed the legislature and was sent to the Governor. We will continue to support our other priority bills that did not pass during the interim before the second half of the biennium begins in January 2024.

Bills That Passed

[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, Senate passed; yeas 29; nays,19, excused 2. Delivered to Governor 4/19)*

[SB 5152](#) Defining synthetic media and providing relief for candidates and campaigns

Senate passed; 35 yeas 13 nays, 13; absent, 0; excused, 1, House passed 67 yeas 67, nays 30, 1 excused with amendments. Passed final passage 32 yeas, 14 nays, 3 excused. Delivered to Governor 4/19)

Bills That Did Not Pass

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 summer. 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)*

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 and is dead for 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.**

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.

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 [Political Disclosure Reporting Data | Washington State Public Disclosure Commission \(PDC\)](#) 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, Money In Politics Issue Chair, cmadigan@lwvwa.org.