



## Weekly Legislative Update: Money in Politics

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**April 9, 2023**

Much floor action! The next cutoff date for our bills is Tues., April 12, when policy bills must be out of the opposite house. One of our priority bills, [SB 5284](#) **Concerning Campaign Finance Disclosure** passed out of both chambers, with differences that will need to be reconciled. [HB 1317](#) **Concerning Grassroots Lobbying Disclosure** is still in Rules and needs our support to get it pulled to the Senate floor for a vote.

### Bills Needing Action This Week

Please contact members of the Senate Rules committee to urge them to move this bill to the floor for a vote before April 12! Are your representatives on this list? If so, please send a quick email or call asking them to move [HB 1317](#) Concerning Grassroots Lobbying Disclosure to the floor for a vote. **The next Rules Committee meeting is Monday April 10 at noon.**

This bill clarifies reporting requirements and ensures that sponsors of messages that exceed a certain dollar threshold to the public encouraging action during the legislative session be identified while the bill is being considered instead of 30-40 days after the message is presented.

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*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) See Action Alert above*

### **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)*

### **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. *(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). We will be watching for the reconciliation between the two versions of the bill.

## 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.*

## **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@lwwva.org](mailto:cmadigan@lwwva.org).