



Weekly Legislative Update: Money in Politics

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February 26, 2023

Two important cutoff dates have now passed. Policy bills had to be out of the house of origin by Feb. 17, and some bills with fiscal implications passed out by Feb. 24. Bills with larger fiscal implications have until March 8 to leave the house of origin. Work will be done in executive committees, and on the floor of the House and Senate, with not as many public hearings.

Bills Needing Action 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.**

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 State Gov't & Tribal Relations: public hearing 1/24, Exec 1/31, referred to Rules)

Contact Your Representative!

Using the following link, verify your district, select "support", then send an email to your Representatives. [Comment on this bill HERE.](#)

Talking points:

This bill is an important upgrade to the existing law that is the result of years of stakeholder work and offers important clarification for campaigns and better disclosure for the public. Please ask your colleagues to move out of Rules to the Floor for a vote this week!

Bills We Support

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)

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, referred to House State Government & Tribal Relations 2/17)

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. 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. They also adopted the amendment to replace prohibition on contributions from or expenditures by foreign nationals with prohibition on contributions for or expenditures by foreign-influenced corporations. This also removes the requirement for campaigns to collect certifications and replaces that with a statement from the corporation filed with the PDC. *(Senate passed; yeas, 29; nays, 19; absent, 0; excused, 1, referred to House State Government & Tribal Relations 2/17)*

Bills We Are Watching

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

(House State Gov't & Tribal Relations: public hearing 1/24, Exec 1/31, 2nd reading Rules. See SB 5284)

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

(Senate passed; yeas, 35; nays, 13; absent, 0; excused, 1, referred to House State Government & Tribal Relations 2/17)

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 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@lwvwa.org.