

Weekly Legislative Update: **Money in Politics**

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Committees in both chambers have been holding public hearings on the bills from the opposite chamber that are still viable. The next cutoff date is Wed., March 29, when policy bills must be out of committee. Two of our priority bills passed out of committee and we have one priority bill **[SB 5284](#) Concerning Campaign Finance Disclosure** scheduled for executive session next week. See below for an update on this bill.

Bills Needing Action This Week

Check back next week for action.

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 3/24 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, placed on second reading by rules committee 3/24)

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 adding this provision back to ensure sufficient funding for the successful and timely completion of these projects.

We have heard the Senate floor amendment that prohibited contributions from or expenditures by foreign-influenced corporations will be removed from the bill during this week's executive session. Thank you for your advocacy - it made a difference - and once the language is perfected, there is a good chance we will see action on this important ban in 2024 *(Senate passed; yeas, 29; nays, 19; absent, 0; excused, 1, executive session House State Government & Tribal Relations 3/28 or 3/29)*

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)

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

(Senate passed; yeas, 35; nays, 13; absent, 0; excused, 1, executive session House State Government & Tribal Relations 3/22)

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@lwvwa.org.