



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 489

January Session, 2025

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1405

Senate, April 3, 2025

The Committee on Government Oversight reported through SEN. GADKAR-WILCOX of the 22nd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

**AN ACT MODIFYING CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS AND THE
POWERS OF THE STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT
COMMISSION.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subdivisions (25) and (26) of section 9-601 of the general
2 statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
3 (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

4 (25) "Organization expenditure" means an expenditure by a party
5 committee, legislative caucus committee or legislative leadership
6 committee for the benefit of a candidate or candidate committee for:

7 (A) The preparation, display or mailing or other distribution of a
8 party candidate listing, including the electronic sharing, posting or
9 forwarding of content created by a candidate committee or other
10 committee on behalf of a candidate, the use of a personal electronic mail
11 list or an existing electronic mail account for such purposes and other
12 similar de minimis activity that may or may not be related to

13 fundraising. As used in this subparagraph, "party candidate listing"
14 means any communication that meets the following criteria: (i) The
15 communication lists the name or names of candidates for election to
16 public office, (ii) the communication is distributed through public
17 advertising such as broadcast stations, cable television, newspapers or
18 similar media, or through direct mail, telephone, electronic mail,
19 publicly accessible sites on the Internet or personal delivery, and (iii) the
20 communication is made to promote the success or defeat of any
21 candidate or slate of candidates seeking the nomination for election, or
22 election or for the purpose of aiding or promoting the success or defeat
23 of any referendum question or the success or defeat of any political
24 party, provided such communication is not a solicitation for or on behalf
25 of a candidate committee;

26 (B) A document in printed or electronic form, including a party
27 platform, an electronic page providing merchant account services to be
28 used by a candidate for the collection of on-line contributions, a copy of
29 an issue paper, information pertaining to the requirements of this title,
30 a list of registered voters and voter identification information, which
31 document is created or maintained by a party committee, legislative
32 caucus committee or legislative leadership committee for the general
33 purposes of party or caucus building and is provided (i) to a candidate
34 who is a member of the party that has established such party committee,
35 or (ii) to a candidate who is a member of the party of the caucus or leader
36 who has established such legislative caucus committee or legislative
37 leadership committee, whichever is applicable;

38 (C) A campaign event at which campaign materials are present and
39 food or beverage may be provided, but at which no contribution shall
40 be received, solicited or bundled; or

41 (D) The retention of the services of an advisor or individual to
42 provide assistance relating to a candidate's campaign.

43 (26) "Solicit" means (A) requesting that a contribution be made, (B)
44 participating in any fundraising activities for a candidate committee,
45 exploratory committee, political committee or party committee,

46 including, but not limited to, forwarding tickets to potential
47 contributors, receiving contributions for transmission to any such
48 committee, serving on the committee that is hosting a fundraising event,
49 introducing the candidate or making other public remarks at a
50 fundraising event, being honored or otherwise recognized at a
51 fundraising event, or bundling contributions, (C) serving as
52 chairperson, treasurer or deputy treasurer of any such committee, or (D)
53 establishing a political committee for the sole purpose of soliciting or
54 receiving contributions for any committee. "Solicit" does not include (i)
55 making a contribution that is otherwise permitted under this chapter,
56 (ii) informing any person of a position taken by a candidate for public
57 office or a public official, (iii) notifying the person of any activities of, or
58 contact information for, any candidate for public office, (iv) serving as a
59 member in any party committee or as an officer of such committee that
60 is not otherwise prohibited in this subdivision, [or] (v) mere attendance
61 at a [fundraiser] fundraising event, or (vi) electronically sharing a link
62 to a fundraising Internet web site or an invitation to a fundraising event,
63 if shared by a party committee, legislative caucus committee or
64 legislative leadership committee.

65 Sec. 2. Subsections (a) to (c), inclusive, of section 9-621 of the general
66 statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
67 (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

68 (a) No individual shall make or incur any expenditure with the
69 consent of, in coordination with or in consultation with any candidate,
70 candidate committee or candidate's agent, no group of two or more
71 individuals acting together that receives funds or makes or incurs
72 expenditures not exceeding one thousand dollars in the aggregate and
73 has not formed a political committee shall make or incur any
74 expenditure, and no candidate or committee shall make or incur any
75 expenditure including an organization expenditure for a party
76 candidate listing, as defined in subparagraph (A) of subdivision (25) of
77 section 9-601, as amended by this act, for any written, typed or other
78 printed communication, [or] any web-based, written communication or
79 any text message communication, which promotes the success or defeat

80 of any candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or election or
81 promotes or opposes any political party or solicits funds to benefit any
82 political party or committee unless such communication bears upon its
83 face as a disclaimer (1) the words "paid for by" and the following: (A) In
84 the case of such an individual, the name and address of such individual;
85 (B) [in the case of a committee other than a party committee, the name
86 of the committee and its treasurer; (C)] in the case of a [party] committee,
87 the name of the committee; or [(D)] (C) in the case of a group of two or
88 more individuals that receives funds or makes or incurs expenditures
89 not exceeding one thousand dollars in the aggregate and has not formed
90 a political committee, the name of the group and the name and address
91 of its agent, and (2) the words "approved by" and the following: (A) In
92 the case of an individual, group or committee other than a candidate
93 committee making or incurring an expenditure with the consent of, in
94 coordination with or in consultation with any candidate, candidate
95 committee or candidate's agent, the name of the candidate; or (B) in the
96 case of a candidate committee, the name of the candidate. For any text
97 message communication, the appearance of such a disclaimer in an
98 initial text message or the display of a link within the body of such
99 message to an Internet web site where such a disclaimer appears shall
100 be deemed to satisfy the requirements of this subsection.

101 (b) In addition to the requirements of subsection (a) of this section:

102 (1) No candidate or candidate committee or exploratory committee
103 established by a candidate shall make or incur any expenditure for
104 television advertising or Internet video advertising, which promotes the
105 success of such candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or
106 election or the defeat of another candidate's campaign for nomination at
107 a primary or election, unless, as a disclaimer, (A) [at the end of] during
108 such advertising there appears simultaneously, for a period of not less
109 than four seconds, (i) a clearly identifiable photographic or similar
110 image of the candidate making such expenditure, and (ii) a clearly
111 readable printed statement identifying such candidate [,] and indicating
112 that such candidate has approved the advertising, [and (iii) a
113 simultaneous, personal audio message, in the following form: "I am

114 (candidate's name) and I approved this message",] and (B) the
115 candidate's name and image appear in [, and the candidate's voice is
116 contained in,] the narrative of the advertising, before the end of such
117 advertising;

118 (2) No candidate or candidate committee or exploratory committee
119 established by a candidate shall make or incur any expenditure for radio
120 advertising or Internet audio advertising, which promotes the success
121 of such candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or election or
122 the defeat of another candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary
123 or election, unless, as a disclaimer, (A) the advertising ends with a
124 personal audio statement by the candidate making such expenditure (i)
125 identifying such candidate and the office such candidate is seeking, and
126 (ii) indicating that such candidate has approved the advertising in the
127 following form: "I am (candidate's name) and I approved this
128 message", and (B) the candidate's name and voice are contained in the
129 narrative of the advertising, before the end of such advertising; and

130 (3) No candidate or candidate committee or exploratory committee
131 established by a candidate shall make or incur any expenditure for
132 automated telephone calls which promote the success of such
133 candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or election or the
134 defeat of another candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or
135 election, unless the candidate's name and voice are contained in the
136 narrative of the call, before the end of such call.

137 (c) No business entity, organization, association, committee, or group
138 of two or more individuals who have joined solely to promote the
139 success or defeat of a referendum question shall make or incur any
140 expenditure for any written, typed or other printed communication
141 which promotes the success or defeat of any referendum question unless
142 such communication bears upon its face, as a disclaimer, the words
143 "paid for by" and the following: (1) In the case of a business entity,
144 organization or association, the name of the business entity,
145 organization or association and the name of its chief executive officer or
146 equivalent, and in the case such communication is made during the

147 ninety-day period immediately prior to the referendum, such
148 communication shall also bear on its face the names of the five persons
149 who made the five largest aggregate covered transfers to such business
150 entity, organization or association during the twelve-month period
151 immediately prior to such referendum. The communication shall also
152 state that additional information about the business entity, organization
153 or association making such communication may be found on the State
154 Elections Enforcement Commission's Internet web site; (2) [in the case
155 of a political committee, the name of the committee and the name of its
156 treasurer; (3)] in the case of a political committee or a party committee,
157 the name of the committee; or [(4)] (3) in the case of such a group of two
158 or more individuals, the name of the group and the name and address
159 of its agent.

160 Sec. 3. Subsection (h) of section 9-621 of the general statutes is
161 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
162 *2025*):

163 (h) (1) No person shall make or incur an independent expenditure for
164 any written, typed or other printed communication, including on a
165 billboard, or any web-based, written communication, unless such
166 communication bears upon its face, as a disclaimer, the words "Paid for
167 by" and the name of such person and the following statement: "This
168 message was made independent of any candidate or political party.". In
169 the case of a person making or incurring such an independent
170 expenditure during the ninety-day period immediately prior to the
171 primary or election for which the independent expenditure is made,
172 such communication shall also bear upon its face the names of the five
173 persons who made the five largest aggregate covered transfers to the
174 person making such communication during the twelve-month period
175 immediately prior to such primary or election, as applicable. The
176 communication shall also state that additional information about the
177 person making such communication may be found on the State
178 Elections Enforcement Commission's Internet web site.

179 (2) In addition to the requirements of subdivision (1) of this

180 subsection, no person shall make or incur an independent expenditure
181 for a video broadcast by television, satellite or Internet, unless at the end
182 of such advertising there appears for a period of not less than four
183 seconds as a disclaimer, the following as [an audio message and] a
184 written statement: "This message was paid for by (person making the
185 communication) and made independent of any candidate or political
186 party.". In the case of a person making or incurring such an independent
187 expenditure during the ninety-day period immediately prior to the
188 primary or election for which the independent expenditure is made,
189 such communication shall also list the names of the five persons who
190 made the five largest aggregate covered transfers to the person making
191 such communication during the twelve-month period immediately
192 prior to such primary or election, as applicable. The communication
193 shall also state that additional information about the person making
194 such communication may be found on the State Elections Enforcement
195 Commission's Internet web site.

196 (3) In addition to the requirements of subdivision (1) of this
197 subsection, no person shall make or incur an independent expenditure
198 for an audio communication broadcast by radio, satellite or Internet,
199 unless the advertising ends with a disclaimer that is a personal audio
200 statement by such person's agent (A) identifying the person paying for
201 the expenditure, and (B) indicating that the message was made
202 independent of any candidate or political party, using the following
203 form: "I am (name of the person's agent), (title), of (the person).
204 This message was made independent of any candidate or political
205 party.". In the case of a person making or incurring such an independent
206 expenditure during the ninety-day period immediately prior to the
207 primary or election for which the independent expenditure is made,
208 such communication shall state the names of the five persons who made
209 the five largest aggregate covered transfers to the person making such
210 communication during the twelve-month period immediately prior to
211 such primary or election, as applicable. The communication shall also
212 state that additional information about the person making such
213 communication may be found on the State Elections Enforcement
214 Commission's Internet web site.

215 (4) In addition to the requirements of subdivision (1) of this
216 subsection, no person shall make or incur an independent expenditure
217 for telephone calls, unless the narrative of the telephone call identifies
218 the person making the expenditure and during the ninety-day period
219 immediately prior to the primary or election for which the independent
220 expenditure is made, such communication shall state the names of the
221 five persons who made the five largest aggregate covered transfers to
222 the person making such communication during the twelve-month
223 period immediately prior to such primary or election, as applicable. The
224 communication shall also state that additional information about the
225 person making such communication may be found on the State
226 Elections Enforcement Commission's Internet web site.

227 Sec. 4. Subparagraph (B) of subdivision (5) of subsection (a) of section
228 9-7b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted
229 in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

230 (B) When conducting an audit after an election or primary, the
231 commission shall randomly audit not more than [fifty] twenty per cent
232 of candidate committees, which shall be selected through the process of
233 a weighted lottery conducted by the commission that takes into account
234 the selection frequency of a district served by the office of state senator
235 or state representative, as applicable, for the immediately preceding
236 three regular elections for such office and increases or decreases the
237 likelihood that such district will be selected for audit based on such
238 selection frequency, except that the commissioner shall audit all
239 candidate committees for candidates for a state-wide office.

240 Sec. 5. Subdivision (14) of subsection (a) of section 9-7b of the general
241 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
242 (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

243 (14) To (A) adopt and publish regulations and issue declaratory
244 rulings pursuant to chapter 54 to carry out the provisions of section 9-
245 7a, as amended by this act, this section, and chapters 155 and 157, ; to]
246 (B) issue upon request and publish advisory opinions in the Connecticut
247 Law Journal upon the requirements of chapters 155 and 157, (C) subject

248 to the provisions of subsection (c) of this section, issue and publish
249 guidance documents relating to the requirements of chapters 155 and
250 157, and [to] (D) make recommendations to the General Assembly
251 concerning suggested revisions of the election laws, except that the
252 commission shall not issue any declaratory ruling or advisory opinion
253 relating to the provisions of chapter 157 during the one-hundred-eighty-
254 day period immediately preceding a state election, provided nothing in
255 this subdivision shall be construed to limit the commission's ability
256 during such period to provide general guidance and clarification
257 relating to the provisions of said chapter;

258 Sec. 6. Section 9-7b of the general statutes is amended by adding
259 subsection (c) as follows (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

260 (NEW) (c) On and after July 1, 2025, prior to the issuance and
261 publication of any new guidance document relating to the requirements
262 of chapters 155 and 157, or the revision of any such existing guidance
263 document, the commission shall submit such guidance document to the
264 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
265 matters relating to government oversight, which shall hold a public
266 hearing on such guidance document within thirty days after the date of
267 submittal to such committee. The commission shall include with the
268 guidance document a summary of the changes in the law the
269 commission is proposing to clarify through such guidance document.
270 Such committee may reject such guidance document by a majority vote.
271 If such committee fails to vote to approve or reject such guidance
272 document within thirty days after the date of submittal to such
273 committee, such guidance document shall be deemed approved and the
274 commission may issue and publish such guidance document.

275 Sec. 7. Subsections (c) to (e), inclusive, of section 9-704 of the general
276 statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
277 (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

278 (c) (1) [For] Subject to the provisions of subdivision (3) of this
279 subsection, for elections for the office of Governor, Lieutenant
280 Governor, Attorney General, State Comptroller, State Treasurer or

281 Secretary of the State held in [2022] 2026, and thereafter, the two-
282 hundred-fifty-dollar maximum individual contribution amount in
283 subdivision (1) or (2) [, as applicable,] of subsection (a) of this section, as
284 applicable, shall be adjusted by the State Elections Enforcement
285 Commission not later than [January 15, 2022] December 30, 2025, and
286 quadrennially thereafter, in accordance with any change in the
287 consumer price index for all urban consumers as published by the
288 United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, during
289 the period beginning on [January 1, 2017] December 16, 2016, and
290 ending on December [thirty-first] fifteenth in [the year preceding] the
291 year in which said adjustment is to be made.

292 (2) [For] (A) Subject to the provisions of subdivision (3) of this
293 subsection, for elections for the office of state senator or state
294 representative held in 2020, and thereafter until December 31, 2025, the
295 two-hundred-fifty-dollar maximum individual contribution amount in
296 subdivision (3) or (4) [, as applicable,] of subsection (a) of this section, as
297 applicable, shall be adjusted by the State Elections Enforcement
298 Commission not later than January 15, 2020, and biennially thereafter,
299 in accordance with any change in the consumer price index for all urban
300 consumers as published by the United States Department of Labor,
301 Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the period beginning on January 1,
302 2017, and ending on December thirty-first in the year preceding the year
303 in which said adjustment is to be made.

304 (B) Subject to the provisions of subdivision (3) of this subsection, for
305 elections for the office of state senator or state representative held in
306 2026, and thereafter, the two-hundred-fifty-dollar maximum individual
307 contribution amount in subdivision (3) or (4) of subsection (a) of this
308 section, as applicable, shall be adjusted by the State Elections
309 Enforcement Commission not later than December 30, 2025, and
310 biennially thereafter, in accordance with any change in the consumer
311 price index for all urban consumers as published by the United States
312 Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the period
313 beginning on December 16, 2016, and ending on December fifteenth in
314 the year in which said adjustment is to be made.

315 (3) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, on
316 and after December 30, 2025, the maximum individual contribution
317 amount resulting from any adjustment made by the State Elections
318 Enforcement Commission, pursuant to subdivision (1) or (2) of this
319 subsection, as applicable, shall remain in effect until the immediately
320 following adjustment is made by the commission, at which time a new
321 maximum individual contribution amount shall take effect.

322 (B) In the event that any adjustment made by the State Elections
323 Enforcement Commission, pursuant to subdivision (1) or (2) of this
324 subsection, as applicable, results in a new maximum individual
325 contribution amount that would be less than the maximum individual
326 contribution amount that resulted from the immediately preceding
327 adjustment, (i) such new maximum individual contribution amount
328 shall not take effect, and (ii) the maximum individual contribution
329 amount that resulted from the immediately preceding adjustment shall
330 remain in effect until the next adjustment made by the commission
331 pursuant to subdivision (1) or (2) of this subsection, as applicable.

332 (d) Each individual who makes a contribution of more than fifty
333 dollars to a candidate committee established to aid or promote the
334 success of a participating candidate for nomination or election shall
335 include with the contribution a certification that contains the same
336 information described in subdivision (3) of subsection (c) of section 9-
337 608 and shall follow the same procedure prescribed in said subsection.

338 (e) (1) The following shall not be deemed to be qualifying
339 contributions under subsection (a) of this section and shall be returned
340 to the contributor by the treasurer of the candidate committee [to the
341 contributor or transmitted to] or by the State Elections Enforcement
342 Commission [for deposit in the Citizens' Election Fund] in accordance
343 with the provisions of subdivision (2) of subsection (d) of section 9-706,
344 as amended by this act:

345 [(1)] (A) A contribution from a principal of a state contractor or
346 prospective state contractor;

347 [(2)] (B) A contribution of less than five dollars; [, and a contribution
348 of five dollars or more from an individual who does not provide the full
349 name and complete address of the individual;]

350 [(3)] (C) A contribution under subdivision (1) or (2) of subsection (a)
351 of this section from an individual who does not reside in the state, in
352 excess of the applicable limit on contributions from out-of-state
353 individuals in subsection (a) of this section; and

354 [(4)] (D) A contribution made by a youth who is less than twelve years
355 of age.

356 (2) A contribution of five dollars or more from an individual who
357 does not provide the full name and complete address of such individual
358 shall not be deemed to be a qualifying contribution under subsection (a)
359 of this section and shall be returned to the contributor by the treasurer
360 of the candidate committee, if practicable, or transmitted to the State
361 Elections Enforcement Commission for deposit in the Citizens' Election
362 Fund.

363 Sec. 8. Subsections (b) to (d), inclusive, of section 9-706 of the general
364 statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
365 (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

366 (b) The application shall include a written certification that:

367 (1) The candidate committee has received the required amount of
368 qualifying contributions;

369 (2) The candidate committee has repaid all moneys borrowed on
370 behalf of the campaign, as required by subsection (b) of section 9-710;

371 (3) The candidate committee has returned, whenever practicable, any
372 contribution of five dollars or more from an individual who does not
373 include the individual's name and address with the contribution;

374 (4) The candidate committee has [returned] taken reasonable efforts
375 to return all contributions or portions of contributions that do not meet

376 the criteria for qualifying contributions under section 9-704, as amended
377 by this act, and has transmitted all excess qualifying contributions to the
378 Citizens' Election Fund;

379 (5) The treasurer of the candidate committee will: (A) Comply with
380 the provisions of chapter 155 and this chapter, and (B) maintain and
381 furnish all records required pursuant to chapter 155 and this chapter
382 and any regulation adopted pursuant to such chapters;

383 (6) All moneys received from the Citizens' Election Fund will be
384 deposited upon receipt into the depository account of the candidate
385 committee;

386 (7) The treasurer of the candidate committee will expend all moneys
387 received from the fund in accordance with the provisions of subsection
388 (g) of section 9-607 and regulations adopted by the State Elections
389 Enforcement Commission under subsection (e) of this section;

390 (8) If the candidate withdraws from the campaign, becomes ineligible
391 or dies during the campaign, the candidate committee of the candidate
392 will return to the commission, for deposit in the fund, all moneys
393 received from the fund pursuant to sections 9-700 to 9-716, inclusive,
394 which said candidate committee has not spent as of the date of such
395 occurrence;

396 (9) All outstanding civil penalties or forfeitures assessed pursuant to
397 chapters 155 to 157, inclusive, against the current or any former
398 committee of the candidate have been paid, provided (A) in the case of
399 any candidate seeking nomination for or election to the office of
400 Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State Comptroller,
401 Secretary of the State or State Treasurer, any such penalty or forfeiture
402 was assessed not later than twenty-four months prior to the submission
403 of an application pursuant to this section; or (B) in the case of any
404 candidate seeking nomination for or election to the office of state senator
405 or state representative, any such penalty or forfeiture was assessed not
406 later than twelve months prior to the submission of an application
407 pursuant to this section;

408 (10) The treasurer has paid any civil penalties or forfeitures assessed
409 pursuant to chapters 155 to 157, inclusive, and has not been convicted
410 of or pled guilty or nolo contendere to, in a court of competent
411 jurisdiction, any (A) felony involving fraud, forgery, larceny,
412 embezzlement or bribery, or (B) criminal offense under this title, unless
413 at least eight years have elapsed from the date of the conviction or plea
414 or the completion of any sentence, whichever date is later, without a
415 subsequent conviction of or plea to another such felony or offense;

416 (11) The candidate has not been convicted of or pled guilty or nolo
417 contendere to, in a court of competent jurisdiction, a criminal offense
418 under this title unless at least eight years have elapsed from the date of
419 the conviction or plea or the completion of any sentence, whichever date
420 is later, without a subsequent conviction of or plea to another such
421 offense; and

422 (12) The candidate has never been convicted of or pled guilty or nolo
423 contendere to, in a court of competent jurisdiction, a felony related to
424 the individual's public office, other than a criminal offense under this
425 title in accordance with subdivision (11) of this subsection.

426 (c) The application shall be accompanied by a cumulative itemized
427 accounting of all funds received, expenditures made and expenses
428 incurred but not yet paid by the candidate committee as of three days
429 preceding the day the application is filed. Such accounting shall be
430 sworn to under penalty of false statement by the treasurer of the
431 candidate committee. The commission shall prescribe the form of the
432 application and the cumulative itemized accounting. The form for such
433 accounting shall conform to the requirements of section 9-608. Both the
434 candidate and the treasurer of the candidate committee shall sign the
435 application.

436 (d) (1) In accordance with the provisions of subsection (g) of this
437 section, the commission shall review the application [,] and determine
438 whether [(1)] (A) the candidate committee for the applicant has received
439 the required qualifying contributions, [(2)] (B) in the case of an
440 application for a grant from the fund for a convention campaign, the

441 applicant has met the applicable condition under subsection (a) of this
442 section for applying for such grant and complied with the provisions of
443 subsections (b) and (c) of this section, [(3)] (C) in the case of an
444 application for a grant from the fund for a primary campaign, the
445 applicant has met the applicable condition under subsection (a) of this
446 section for applying for such grant and complied with the provisions of
447 subsections (b) and (c) of this section, [(4)] (D) in the case of an
448 application for a grant from the fund for a general election campaign,
449 the applicant has met the applicable condition under subsection (a) of
450 this section for applying for such grant and complied with the
451 provisions of subsections (b) and (c) of this section, and [(5)] (E) in the
452 case of an application by a minor party or petitioning party candidate
453 for a grant from the fund for a general election campaign, the applicant
454 qualifies as an eligible minor party candidate or an eligible petitioning
455 party candidate, whichever is applicable.

456 (2) During such review of the application:

457 (A) If the commission deems a contribution received by the candidate
458 committee not to be a qualifying contribution, the commission shall
459 advise the treasurer of the candidate committee of such determination
460 and cite the applicable reason under subsection (e) of section 9-704, as
461 amended by this act, for such determination and shall return the
462 contribution to the contributor based on the information provided on
463 the applicable contribution certification form;

464 (B) There shall be a presumption that information provided on a
465 contribution certification form is true and correct, which presumption
466 may only be rebutted by proof otherwise based on a prior investigative
467 finding of the commission; and

468 (C) The commission shall not disqualify any contribution from being
469 counted as a qualifying contribution for reason that (i) the residential
470 address associated with such contribution does not match the billing
471 address associated with such contribution, or (ii) such contribution was
472 made in response to an electronically shared link to a fundraising
473 Internet web site or invitation to a fundraising event.

474 (3) If the commission approves an application, the commission shall
475 determine the amount of the grant payable to the candidate committee
476 for the applicant pursuant to section 9-705 from the fund, and notify the
477 State Comptroller and the candidate of such candidate committee of
478 such amount. In so notifying the State Comptroller, the commission
479 shall (A) ensure that the qualified candidate committee of an applicant
480 is entitled to a full grant for the general election campaign only if (i) the
481 applicant's written certification under subsection (b) of this section
482 affirms that such committee received the required qualifying
483 contributions under section 9-704, as amended by this act, prior to the
484 seventieth day before the election, and (ii) the cumulative itemized
485 accounting under subsection (c) of this section demonstrates that the
486 applicant reasonably believes such written certification to be true and
487 correct, and (B) advise the State Comptroller accordingly. If the timing
488 of the commission's approval of the grant for a primary campaign or
489 general election campaign in relation to the Secretary of the State's
490 determination of ballot status is such that the commission cannot
491 determine whether the qualified candidate committee is entitled to the
492 applicable full initial grant for the primary or election or the applicable
493 partial grant for the primary or election, as the case may be, the
494 commission shall approve the lesser applicable partial initial grant. The
495 commission shall then authorize the payment of the remaining portion
496 of the applicable primary campaign or general election campaign grant
497 after the commission has knowledge of the circumstances regarding the
498 ballot status of the opposing candidates in such primary or election. Not
499 later than thirty days following notification by the commission in the
500 case of a convention campaign grant, or not later than two business days
501 following notification by the commission in the case of any other grant,
502 the State Comptroller shall draw an order on the State Treasurer for
503 payment of any such approved amount to the qualified candidate
504 committee from the fund.

505 Sec. 9. Subsections (b) to (d), inclusive, of section 9-7a of the general
506 statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
507 (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

508 (b) (1) A vacancy in the commission shall not impair the right of the
509 remaining members to exercise all the powers of the commission, and
510 three members of said commission shall constitute a quorum.

511 (2) All meetings of the commission, noticed in accordance with the
512 provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, as defined in section 1-
513 200, shall be broadcast contemporaneously and continuously on an
514 Internet web site identified in such notice. Such Internet web site shall
515 not require that any member of the public (A) create an account to access
516 such Internet web site, or (B) affirmatively reconnect to such broadcast
517 after an interruption due to the commission holding an executive
518 session. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to require the
519 broadcast of any portion of a meeting during which the commission is
520 holding an executive session.

521 (c) The commission shall at the close of each fiscal year report to the
522 General Assembly and the Governor concerning the action it has taken
523 including, but not limited to a list of all complaints investigated by the
524 commission and the disposition of each such complaint, by voting
525 districts, where the alleged violation occurred; the names, salaries and
526 duties of the individuals in its employ and the money it has disbursed;
527 and shall make such further reports on the matters within its jurisdiction
528 and such recommendations for further legislation as may appear
529 desirable.

530 (d) [The] (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection,
531 the commission shall, subject to the provisions of chapter 67, employ
532 such employees as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this
533 section, section 9-7b, as amended by this act, and section 9-623,
534 including an executive director, and may apply to the Commissioner of
535 Emergency Services and Public Protection or to the Chief State's
536 Attorney for necessary investigatory personnel, which the same are
537 hereby authorized to provide.

538 (2) (A) On or before March 1, 2027, and quadrennially thereafter, the
539 commission shall, with the advice and consent of either house of the
540 General Assembly, appoint an executive director in the manner

541 prescribed in this subdivision, to serve at the pleasure of the commission
542 but not longer than four years after such appointment, unless
543 reappointed under the provisions of this subdivision.

544 (B) On or before February 1, 2027, and quadrennially thereafter, the
545 commission shall submit a nomination for executive director to either
546 house of the General Assembly. Such house shall immediately refer the
547 nomination to its committee on executive nominations, which shall
548 report thereon by resolution within fifteen calendar days from the date
549 of reference. Such house, by resolution, shall confirm or reject the
550 nomination. If confirmed, the nominee shall take office on the first day
551 of March in the year in which the appointment is submitted. If such
552 house rejects the nomination before the first day of March in the year in
553 which it is submitted, the procedure prescribed in subparagraph (C) of
554 this subdivision shall be followed.

555 (C) If a vacancy occurs in the office of executive director while the
556 General Assembly is in regular session, the commission shall, not later
557 than thirty days after the occurrence of the vacancy, submit its
558 nomination to fill the vacancy to either house of the General Assembly.
559 The house to which the nomination is submitted shall immediately refer
560 the nomination to its committee on executive nominations, which shall
561 report thereon by resolution within fifteen legislative days from the date
562 of reference. Such house shall confirm or reject such nomination. If such
563 house, by resolution, confirms the nomination within thirty calendar
564 days after it is submitted, the nominee shall forthwith take office to serve
565 at the pleasure of the commission but not longer than the original
566 appointee could have served under his or her appointment. If such
567 house rejects the nomination within thirty calendar days after it is
568 submitted, the commission shall, within thirty calendar days, submit
569 another nomination to either house of the General Assembly, provided,
570 if any nomination is submitted less than thirty calendar days before the
571 date established by the Constitution for adjournment of the General
572 Assembly, and the house to which it is submitted fails to confirm or
573 reject the nomination before such adjournment on said date, the
574 procedure prescribed in subparagraph (D) of this subdivision shall be

575 followed.

576 (D) If a vacancy occurs in the office of executive director while the
577 General Assembly is not in regular session, it shall be filled by the
578 commission until the sixth Wednesday of the next session of the General
579 Assembly. At the beginning of the next regular session of the General
580 Assembly, the commission shall submit the name of the vacancy
581 appointee to either house of the General Assembly as said commission
582 elects and the procedure prescribed in subparagraph (C) of this
583 subdivision shall be followed.

584 (E) No person who has been rejected by resolution of the house to
585 which his or her name has been submitted by the commission shall serve
586 in the office of executive director during the term of the house which
587 rejected him or her.

588 Sec. 10. Subsection (b) of section 9-601a of the general statutes is
589 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
590 *passage*):

591 (b) As used in this chapter and chapter 157, "contribution" does not
592 mean:

593 (1) A loan of money made in the ordinary course of business by a
594 national or state bank;

595 (2) Any communication made by a corporation, organization or
596 association solely to its members, owners, stockholders, executive or
597 administrative personnel, or their families;

598 (3) Nonpartisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote campaigns by
599 any corporation, organization or association aimed at its members,
600 owners, stockholders, executive or administrative personnel, or their
601 families;

602 (4) Uncompensated services provided by individuals volunteering
603 their time on behalf of a party committee, political committee, slate
604 committee or candidate committee, including any services provided for

605 the benefit of nonparticipating and participating candidates under the
606 Citizens' Election Program and any unreimbursed travel expenses made
607 by an individual who volunteers the individual's personal services to
608 any such committee. For purposes of this subdivision, an individual is
609 a volunteer if such individual is not receiving compensation for such
610 services regardless of whether such individual received compensation
611 in the past or may receive compensation for similar services that may be
612 performed in the future;

613 (5) The use of real or personal property, a portion or all of the cost of
614 invitations and the cost of food or beverages, voluntarily provided by
615 an individual to a candidate, including a nonparticipating or
616 participating candidate under the Citizens' Election Program, or to a
617 party, political or slate committee, in rendering voluntary personal
618 services at the individual's residential premises or a community room
619 in the individual's residence facility, to the extent that the cumulative
620 value of the invitations, food or beverages provided by an individual on
621 behalf of any candidate or committee does not exceed ~~[four]~~ five
622 hundred dollars with respect to any single event or does not exceed
623 ~~[eight hundred]~~ one thousand dollars for any such event hosted by two
624 or more individuals, provided at least one such individual owns or
625 resides at the residential premises, and further provided the cumulative
626 value of the invitations, food or beverages provided by an individual on
627 behalf of any such candidate or committee does not exceed ~~[eight~~
628 ~~hundred]~~ one thousand dollars with respect to a calendar year or single
629 election, as the case may be;

630 (6) The sale of food or beverage for use by a party, political, slate or
631 candidate committee, including those for a participating or
632 nonparticipating candidate, at a discount, if the charge is not less than
633 the cost to the vendor, to the extent that the cumulative value of the
634 discount given to or on behalf of any single candidate committee does
635 not exceed four hundred dollars with respect to any single primary or
636 election, or to or on behalf of any party, political or slate committee, does
637 not exceed six hundred dollars in a calendar year;

638 (7) The display of a lawn sign by a human being or on real property;

639 (8) The payment, by a party committee or slate committee of the costs
640 of preparation, display, mailing or other distribution incurred by the
641 committee or individual with respect to any printed slate card, sample
642 ballot or other printed list containing the names of three or more
643 candidates;

644 (9) The donation of any item of personal property by an individual to
645 a committee for a fund-raising affair, including a tag sale or auction, or
646 the purchase by an individual of any such item at such an affair, to the
647 extent that the cumulative value donated or purchased does not exceed
648 one hundred dollars;

649 (10) (A) The purchase of advertising space which clearly identifies the
650 purchaser, in a program for a fund-raising affair sponsored by the
651 candidate committee of a candidate for an office of a municipality,
652 provided the cumulative purchase of such space does not exceed two
653 hundred fifty dollars from any single such candidate or the candidate's
654 committee with respect to any single election campaign if the purchaser
655 is a business entity or fifty dollars for purchases by any other person;

656 (B) The purchase of advertising space which clearly identifies the
657 purchaser, in a program for a fund-raising affair or on signs at a fund-
658 raising affair sponsored by a party committee or a political committee,
659 other than an exploratory committee, provided the cumulative purchase
660 of such space does not exceed two hundred fifty dollars from any single
661 party committee or a political committee, other than an exploratory
662 committee, in any calendar year if the purchaser is a business entity or
663 fifty dollars for purchases by any other person. Notwithstanding the
664 provisions of this subparagraph, the following may not purchase
665 advertising space in a program for a fund-raising affair or on signs at a
666 fund-raising affair sponsored by a party committee or a political
667 committee, other than an exploratory committee: (i) A communicator
668 lobbyist, (ii) a member of the immediate family of a communicator
669 lobbyist, (iii) a state contractor, (iv) a prospective state contractor, or (v)
670 a principal of a state contractor or prospective state contractor. As used

671 in this subparagraph, "state contractor", "prospective state contractor"
672 and "principal of a state contractor or prospective state contractor" have
673 the same meanings as provided in subsection (f) of section 9-612;

674 (11) The payment of money by a candidate to the candidate's
675 candidate committee, provided the committee is for a nonparticipating
676 candidate;

677 (12) The donation of goods or services by a business entity to a
678 committee for a fund-raising affair, including a tag sale or auction, to
679 the extent that the cumulative value donated does not exceed two
680 hundred dollars;

681 (13) The advance of a security deposit by an individual to a telephone
682 company, as defined in section 16-1, for telecommunications service for
683 a committee or to another utility company, such as an electric
684 distribution company, provided the security deposit is refunded to the
685 individual;

686 (14) The provision of facilities, equipment, technical and managerial
687 support, and broadcast time by a community antenna television
688 company, as defined in section 16-1, for community access
689 programming pursuant to section 16-331a, unless (A) the major purpose
690 of providing such facilities, equipment, support and time is to influence
691 the nomination or election of a candidate, or (B) such facilities,
692 equipment, support and time are provided on behalf of a political party;

693 (15) The sale of food or beverage by a town committee to an
694 individual at a town fair, county fair, local festival or similar mass
695 gathering held within the state, to the extent that the cumulative
696 payment made by any one individual for such items does not exceed
697 fifty dollars;

698 (16) An organization expenditure by a party committee, legislative
699 caucus committee or legislative leadership committee;

700 (17) The donation of food or beverage by an individual for
701 consumption at a slate, candidate, political committee or party

702 committee meeting, event or activity that is not a fund-raising affair to
703 the extent that the cumulative value of the food or beverages donated
704 by an individual for a single meeting or event does not exceed fifty
705 dollars;

706 (18) The value associated with the de minimis activity on behalf of a
707 party committee, political committee, slate committee or candidate
708 committee, including for activities including, but not limited to, (A) the
709 creation of electronic or written communications or digital photos or
710 video as part of an electronic file created on a voluntary basis without
711 compensation, including, but not limited to, the creation and ongoing
712 content development and delivery of social media on the Internet or
713 telephone, including, but not limited to, the sending or receiving of
714 electronic mail or messages, (B) the posting or display of a candidate's
715 name or group of candidates' names at a town fair, county fair, local
716 festival or similar mass gathering by a party committee, (C) the use of
717 personal property or a service that is customarily attendant to the
718 occupancy of a residential dwelling, or the donation of an item or items
719 of personal property that are customarily used for campaign purposes,
720 by an individual, to a candidate committee, provided the cumulative
721 fair market value of such use of personal property or service or items of
722 personal property does not exceed one hundred dollars in the aggregate
723 for any single election or calendar year, as the case may be;

724 (19) The use of offices, telephones, computers and similar equipment
725 provided by a party committee, legislative caucus committee or
726 legislative leadership committee that serve as headquarters for or are
727 used by such party committee, legislative caucus committee or
728 legislative leadership committee;

729 (20) A communication, as described in subdivision (7) of subsection
730 (b) of section 9-601b, as amended by this act;

731 (21) An independent expenditure, as defined in section 9-601c;

732 (22) A communication containing an endorsement on behalf of a
733 candidate for nomination or election to the office of Governor,

734 Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, State Treasurer, State
735 Comptroller, Attorney General, state senator or state representative,
736 from a candidate for the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor,
737 Secretary of the State, State Treasurer, State Comptroller, Attorney
738 General, state senator or state representative, provided the candidate
739 (A) making the endorsement is unopposed at the time of the
740 communication, and (B) being endorsed paid for such communication;

741 (23) A communication that is sent by mail to addresses in the district
742 for which a candidate being endorsed by another candidate pursuant to
743 this subdivision is seeking nomination or election to the office of state
744 senator or state representative, containing an endorsement on behalf of
745 such candidate for such nomination or election from a candidate for the
746 office of state senator or state representative, provided the candidate (A)
747 making the endorsement is not seeking election to the office of state
748 senator or state representative for a district that contains any
749 geographical area shared by the district for the office to which the
750 endorsed candidate is seeking nomination or election, and (B) being
751 endorsed paid for such communication; or

752 (24) Campaign training events provided to multiple individuals by a
753 legislative caucus committee and any associated materials, provided the
754 cumulative value of such events and materials does not exceed six
755 thousand dollars in the aggregate for a calendar year.

756 Sec. 11. Subsection (b) of section 9-601b of the general statutes is
757 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
758 *passage*):

759 (b) The term "expenditure" does not mean:

760 (1) A loan of money, made in the ordinary course of business, by a
761 state or national bank;

762 (2) A communication made by any corporation, organization or
763 association solely to its members, owners, stockholders, executive or
764 administrative personnel, or their families;

765 (3) Nonpartisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote campaigns by
766 any corporation, organization or association aimed at its members,
767 owners, stockholders, executive or administrative personnel, or their
768 families;

769 (4) Uncompensated services provided by individuals volunteering
770 their time on behalf of a party committee, political committee, slate
771 committee or candidate committee, including any services provided for
772 the benefit of nonparticipating and participating candidates under the
773 Citizens' Election Program and any unreimbursed travel expenses made
774 by an individual who volunteers the individual's personal services to
775 any such committee. For purposes of this subdivision, an individual is
776 a volunteer if such individual is not receiving compensation for such
777 services regardless of whether such individual received compensation
778 in the past or may receive compensation for similar services that may be
779 performed in the future;

780 (5) Any news story, commentary or editorial distributed through the
781 facilities of any broadcasting station, newspaper, magazine or other
782 periodical, unless such facilities are owned or controlled by any political
783 party, committee or candidate;

784 (6) The use of real or personal property, a portion or all of the cost of
785 invitations and the cost of food or beverages, voluntarily provided by
786 an individual to a candidate, including a nonparticipating or
787 participating candidate under the Citizens' Election Program, or to a
788 party, political or slate committee, in rendering voluntary personal
789 services at the individual's residential premises or a community room
790 in the individual's residence facility, to the extent that the cumulative
791 value of the invitations, food or beverages provided by an individual on
792 behalf of any candidate or committee does not exceed [four] five
793 hundred dollars with respect to any single event or does not exceed
794 [eight hundred] one thousand dollars for any such event hosted by two
795 or more individuals, provided at least one such individual owns or
796 resides at the residential premises, and further provided the cumulative
797 value of the invitations, food or beverages provided by an individual on

798 behalf of any such candidate or committee does not exceed [eight
799 hundred] one thousand dollars with respect to a calendar year or single
800 election, as the case may be;

801 (7) A communication described in subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of
802 this section that includes speech or expression made (A) prior to the
803 ninety-day period preceding the date of a primary or an election at
804 which the clearly identified candidate or candidates are seeking
805 nomination to public office or position, that is made for the purpose of
806 influencing any legislative or administrative action, as defined in section
807 1-91, or executive action, or (B) during a legislative session for the
808 purpose of influencing legislative action;

809 (8) An organization expenditure by a party committee, legislative
810 caucus committee or legislative leadership committee;

811 (9) A commercial advertisement that refers to an owner, director or
812 officer of a business entity who is also a candidate and that had
813 previously been broadcast or appeared when the owner, director or
814 officer was not a candidate;

815 (10) A communication containing an endorsement on behalf of a
816 candidate for nomination or election to the office of Governor,
817 Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, State Treasurer, State
818 Comptroller, Attorney General, state senator or state representative,
819 from a candidate for the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor,
820 Secretary of the State, State Treasurer, State Comptroller, Attorney
821 General, state senator or state representative, shall not be an
822 expenditure attributable to the endorsing candidate, if the candidate
823 making the endorsement is unopposed at the time of the
824 communication;

825 (11) A communication that is sent by mail to addresses in the district
826 for which a candidate being endorsed by another candidate pursuant to
827 the provisions of this subdivision is seeking nomination or election to
828 the office of state senator or state representative, containing an
829 endorsement on behalf of such candidate for such nomination or

830 election, from a candidate for the office of state senator or state
 831 representative, shall not be an expenditure attributable to the endorsing
 832 candidate, if the candidate making the endorsement is not seeking
 833 election to the office of state senator or state representative for a district
 834 that contains any geographical area shared by the district for the office
 835 to which the endorsed candidate is seeking nomination or election;

836 (12) Campaign training events provided to multiple individuals by a
 837 legislative caucus committee and any associated materials, provided the
 838 cumulative value of such events and materials does not exceed six
 839 thousand dollars in the aggregate for a calendar year;

840 (13) A lawful communication by any charitable organization which is
 841 a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal
 842 Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding internal
 843 revenue code of the United States, as from time to time amended;

844 (14) The use of offices, telephones, computers and similar equipment
 845 provided by a party committee, legislative caucus committee or
 846 legislative leadership committee that serve as headquarters for or are
 847 used by such party committee, legislative caucus committee or
 848 legislative leadership committee; or

849 (15) An expense or expenses incurred by a human being acting alone
 850 in an amount that is two hundred dollars or less, in the aggregate, that
 851 benefits a candidate for a single election.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	9-601(25) and (26)
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	9-621(a) to (c)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	9-621(h)
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	9-7b(a)(5)(B)
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	9-7b(a)(14)
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	9-7b(c)
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	9-704(c) to (e)
Sec. 8	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	9-706(b) to (d)

Sec. 9	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	9-7a(b) to (d)
Sec. 10	<i>from passage</i>	9-601a(b)
Sec. 11	<i>from passage</i>	9-601b(b)

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 1(26)(D)(v), "fundraiser" was changed to "[fundraiser] fundraising event" for consistency.

GOS *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Elections Enforcement Commission	GF - Cost	218,236	210,826
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	85,827	85,827
Resources of the Citizen's Election Fund	GF - Potential Cost	Minimal	Minimal

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

This bill makes a variety of changes to the state's campaign finance laws resulting in the fiscal impacts outlined below.

Section 7 and 8, create a variety of changes related to State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) oversight, which requires three additional personnel² to meet the requirements of the bill at a cost to SEEC of \$218,236 in FY 26 and \$210,826 in FY 27³, and a fringe cost of \$85,827 in FY 26 and FY 27. The additional personnel will offset the expanded administrative and oversight role of the SEEC.

In addition, these sections reduce the reasons for SEEC to disqualify a contribution resulting in a potential increased cost to the resources of

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 40.71% of payroll in FY 26.

² These positions include a Secretary I, a Fiscal Administrative Officer, and an Elections Officer.

³ This includes a salary cost of \$210,826 in FY 26 and FY 27, and one-time other expenses cost of \$7,500 in FY 26 to support equipment for the positions.

the Citizens' Election Fund. The exact impact depends on the number of candidates who received Citizens' election Program funding who previously would not have qualified.

The remaining sections of the bill make a variety of changes that result in no fiscal impact to the state or municipalities.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation and the number of additional grants issued as a result of the bill.

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 1405****AN ACT MODIFYING CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS AND THE POWERS OF THE STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION.**

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Makes related changes to the state campaign finance law's definitions of the terms "organization expenditure" and "solicit" regarding the sharing of content created by a candidate committee or on behalf of a candidate

[§§ 2-3 — DISCLAIMER REQUIREMENTS](#)

Modifies disclaimer requirements for certain political communications and advertisements by (1) modifying who must be listed in the disclaimer for certain committees, (2) generally applying them to text messages, and (3) removing certain requirements to include an audio disclaimer for video communications or advertisements

[§ 4 — SEEC AUDITS](#)

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[§§ 5 & 6 — SEEC AUTHORITY](#)

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[§§ 7 & 8 — CEP QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTIONS](#)

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[§ 9 — LIVESTREAM OF COMMISSION MEETINGS](#)

Requires SEEC to livestream its meetings

§ 9 — APPOINTMENT OF SEEC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Creates a legislative advise and consent process for the SEEC executive director position, including filling any vacancies

§§ 10-11 — CONTRIBUTION AND EXPENDITURE EXEMPTIONS

Increases the amount an individual or group may spend on certain events for invitations, food, and beverages without being subject to certain campaign finance requirements

BACKGROUND

SUMMARY

This bill makes various changes to the state's campaign finance laws as described in the section-by-section analysis below.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025, except that provisions increasing the maximum spent on invitations, food, and beverages are effective upon passage.

§ 1 — CAMPAIGN FINANCE DEFINITIONS

Makes related changes to the state campaign finance law's definitions of the terms "organization expenditure" and "solicit" regarding the sharing of content created by a candidate committee or on behalf of a candidate

Organization Expenditure

By law, organization expenditures are made by legislative caucus, legislative leadership, or party committees to benefit candidates or their committees. Under existing law, organization expenditures may be made to prepare, display, or distribute a party candidate listing. The bill specifies that this includes (1) electronically sharing, posting, or forwarding content created by a candidate committee or another committee on behalf of a candidate; (2) using personal email lists or existing e-mail accounts used for these activities; and (3) other de minimus activities that may or may not be related to fundraising.

Under existing law, a "party candidate listing" is a communication that (1) lists the name or names of candidates for election; (2) is distributed through public advertising (e.g., cable television, newspapers, or similar media), direct mail, telephone, electronic mail,

publicly accessible Internet sites, or personal delivery; and (3) is made to promote the success or defeat of a candidate or slate of candidates seeking nomination or election, or to aid or promote the success or defeat of a referendum question or a political party. The communication may not be a solicitation for or on behalf of a candidate committee.

Solicit

The state's campaign finance law generally regulates when and how committees may solicit contributions for public office, and requires filing certain information relating to soliciting activities. Under existing law, to "solicit" is to (1) request contributions; (2) participate in fundraising activities for a committee; (3) serve as a committee's chairperson, treasurer, or deputy treasurer; or (4) establish political committees for the sole purpose of obtaining contributions.

It generally does not include (1) making permitted contributions, (2) informing a person about a candidate's or public official's position, (3) providing notice about a candidate's activities or contact information, (4) serving as a party committee member or officer as allowed by law, and (5) attending a fundraiser.

The bill additionally exempts electronically sharing a link to a fundraising website or an invitation to a fundraising event by a legislative caucus, legislative leadership, or a party committee.

§§ 2-3 — DISCLAIMER REQUIREMENTS

Modifies disclaimer requirements for certain political communications and advertisements by (1) modifying who must be listed in the disclaimer for certain committees, (2) generally applying them to text messages, and (3) removing certain requirements to include an audio disclaimer for video communications or advertisements

Disclaimer Requirements (§ 2)

Under state law, any written, typed, or printed communication (including online) from committees that promotes a candidate's success or defeat, promotes or opposes a political party, or solicits funds for a political party or a committee generally must include certain information. The disclaimer must include the words (1) "paid for by" followed by a specified individual name or address depending on the

approving entity and (2) “approved by” followed by the candidate’s name.

Current law specifies that all committees, other than party committees, must list the committee’s and the treasurer’s names after “paid for by.” The bill eliminates the requirement that the treasurer be listed. In doing so, it requires these committees to list only the committee’s name, as is the case for party committees under existing law.

Similarly, under current law, political committees formed solely to promote the success or defeat of a referendum question must disclose the name of its treasurer in any written, typed, or printed communication promoting the referendum’s success or defeat. The bill removes the requirement to include the treasurer’s name but maintains existing law’s requirement to include the name of the committee making the expenditure.

Text Messages (§ 2)

The bill extends existing law’s disclaimer requirements for written, typed, or printed communications to include text messages. It also specifies that for text messages, displaying the required disclaimer in the initial text message or including a link in the message to a website where the disclaimer appears satisfies the requirement.

Television and Internet Video (§§ 2 & 3)

Current law generally requires that television or internet video advertising by a candidate or exploratory committee that promotes the success or defeat of a candidate include a disclaimer at the end of the advertisement. The bill requires that this disclaimer occur during the advertisement instead of at the end.

It also eliminates the requirement that the advertisement include the candidate’s voice and a simultaneous, personal audio message, in the following form: “I am (candidate’s name) and I approved this message.” Existing law, unchanged by the bill, requires the advertisement to include, for at least four seconds, a clearly (1)

identifiable photo or similar image of the candidate making the expenditure and (2) readable printed statement identifying the candidate and indicating that he or she has approved the advertising. The advertisement must also include the candidate's name and image in the advertisement's narrative before its end.

Similarly, under current law, independent expenditures (see below) for video broadcasts by television, satellite, or internet must contain both an audio and a written message (1) stating that "This message was paid for by (person making the communication) and made independent of any candidate or political party" and (2) in certain cases, listing the five largest donors to the person making the expenditure in the past 12 months. The bill eliminates the requirement for the broadcast to include an audio message but maintains the written statement requirement. (An "independent expenditure" is an expenditure made without the consent, coordination, or consultation of a (1) candidate or candidate's agent, (2) candidate committee, (3) political committee, or (4) party committee (CGS § 9-601c).)

§ 4 — SEEC AUDITS

Reduces the maximum percentage of candidate committees SEEC may audit after an election or primary from 50% to 20%

State law authorizes the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) to audit candidate committees after elections and primaries for compliance with campaign finance laws. The bill reduces, from 50% to 20%, the maximum percentage of candidate committees that SEEC may audit as determined by a weighted lottery system.

§§ 5 & 6 — SEEC AUTHORITY

Subjects SEEC declaratory rulings, advisory opinions, and guidance documents to certain restrictions or oversight requirements

Existing law generally authorizes SEEC to oversee and advise on state campaign finance laws. The bill explicitly requires SEEC to issue declaratory rulings under the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act. It also restricts SEEC from issuing declaratory rulings or advisory opinions on the Citizen's Election Program (CEP) within 180 days of a state election. Under the bill, this restriction must not be construed to

limit SEEC's ability to provide general guidance or clarification on the program.

The bill also subjects SEEC's guidance documents on campaign finance and CEP laws to certain approval requirements. Starting July 1, 2025, any new or revised SEEC guidance must be submitted to the Government Oversight Committee along with a summary of any changes in the law that the commission is seeking to clarify.

The committee must hold a public hearing within 30 days after the guidance's submission and may reject any guidance by a majority vote. If the committee fails to approve or reject the guidance within those 30 days, it is deemed approved and SEEC may issue and publish it.

§§ 7 & 8 — CEP QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTIONS

Makes various changes regarding CEP qualifying contributions, including when and how they are adjusted for inflation, procedures for returning and reviewing non-qualifying contributions, and modifying grant application requirements

Inflationary Adjustments (§ 7)

By law, candidates qualify for the CEP by raising a certain number of qualifying contributions (QCs), which must come from individual donors. Individual QC amounts may range from \$5 to \$250, but state law also requires SEEC to adjust the maximum individual QC amount for inflation. For the 2024 election the inflation-adjusted maximum was \$320. In practice, candidates may obtain QCs before these adjustments occur, but the candidates are limited to collecting the statutory maximum of \$250 until the adjustment goes into effect.

The bill requires that starting December 30, 2025, the adjusted individual QC amount continue to apply until SEEC makes its next inflationary adjustment. It also specifies that if the maximum amount would be lower after being adjusted for inflation, the adjustment must be ignored, and the maximum from the immediately preceding adjustment must be maintained.

Additionally, under current law, SEEC must (1) publish the adjusted amounts by January 15 in the year of the applicable election and (2) base

the adjusted amounts on inflationary changes from January 1 in a specified year through December 31 in the year before the adjustment must be made (e.g., through December 31, 2023, for the 2024 election).

Starting January 1, 2026, the bill shifts these dates back 16 days and requires SEEC to publish the adjusted amounts by December 30 in the applicable year and base them on inflationary changes between December 16 of the year before the adjustment to December 15 of the adjustment year.

Return of QCs (§ 7)

By law and unchanged by the bill, a contribution is not a QC if (1) it is from a principal of a state contractor or prospective state contractor, (2) it is less than five dollars, (3) the contributor does not provide his or her full name and address, (4) it is from an out-of-state resident to a candidate for statewide office and exceeds the applicable limit on out-of-state contributions, or (5) the contributor is under age 12.

If a candidate committee receives a contribution that does not meet the QC criteria, current law authorizes the committee's treasurer to either (1) return it to the contributor or (2) submit it to SEEC for deposit in the Citizens' Election Fund (CEF, which funds the CEP).

The bill instead generally requires treasurers to return contributions that do not qualify if they were (1) received from state contractor principals, out-of-state residents, or underage children or (2) for less than five dollars. If the contribution is for five dollars or more and from a contributor who did not provide his or her full name and address, the treasurer must return the contribution, if practicable, or transmit it to SEEC for deposit in the CEF.

Grant Applications (§ 8)

Under existing law, candidates seeking a CEP grant must file an application with SEEC and provide a written certification of certain information, including that the applicant has complied with the law's requirements for returning non-qualifying contributions. The committee must also submit a cumulative itemized accounting of all

funds received, expenditures made, and expenses incurred but not yet paid, as of three days before the application's filing date.

The bill instead requires applicants to certify they have (1) whenever practicable, returned contributions of five dollars or more from a person who did not include their name and address; (2) taken reasonable efforts to return all other non-qualifying contributions; and (3) transmitted any excess contributions to the CEF.

SEEC Review of Grant Application (§ 8)

For QCs submitted to SEEC as part of a CEP grant application, the bill requires the commission to (1) notify the candidate committee about any contribution that does not meet the QC criteria and (2) return any non-qualifying contributions to the committee. Under the bill, SEEC must also cite the applicable statutory reason for its determination. The bill also establishes a presumption that all information on a contribution certification form is accurate, and the presumption may only be rebutted by proof based on the commission's prior investigative findings.

The bill prohibits the commission from disqualifying a contribution because the (1) residential and billing addresses associated with the contribution do not match or (2) contribution was made in response to an electronically shared link to a fundraising website or fundraising event invitation.

Under state law, when the commission approves a CEP grant application it must notify the state comptroller and the qualifying candidate committee about the total grant amount to be received. Generally, committees who apply 71 days or more before an election receive a full grant, while those that apply later receive a percentage of the full grant based on when they apply.

The bill requires the commission, when it notifies the comptroller, to ensure and advise him that the qualified candidate committee is only entitled to the full grant if the committee has submitted (1) an affirmation, as part of its written certification, that the committee received the required QCs at least 71 days before the election and (2) a

cumulative itemized accounting that demonstrates the committee reasonably believes the certification to be accurate (see above).

§ 9 — LIVESTREAM OF COMMISSION MEETINGS

Requires SEEC to livestream its meetings

The bill requires all SEEC meetings noticed under the Freedom of Information Act to be livestreamed on an internet website included in the meeting's notice. The website may not require any member of the public to (1) create an account to access the site or (2) take action to reconnect to the meeting if the commission goes into executive session. The bill specifies that this does not require broadcasting an executive session of the commission.

§ 9 — APPOINTMENT OF SEEC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Creates a legislative advise and consent process for the SEEC executive director position, including filling any vacancies

Under current law, SEEC may hire employees needed to administer the state's campaign finance laws, including its executive director. The bill establishes a legislative appointment process for the executive director position, including when it is vacant.

Under the bill, by March 1, 2027, and every four years after that, the commission must appoint a person to serve at their pleasure for up to a four-year term, unless reappointed for additional terms. The appointment must be approved by either the Senate or the House of Representatives.

SEEC must submit a nomination for the executive director position to either legislative chamber by February 1, 2027, and then every four years after that. The chamber must immediately refer the nomination to the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee, which must report, by resolution, on the nomination within 15 days after its referral to the committee.

The legislative chamber must either confirm or reject the nomination through a resolution. If approved, the nominee must take office on March 1 of the year his or her appointment was submitted.

If the legislative chamber rejects the nominee before March 1, or if the position becomes vacant during the regular legislative session, the commission must submit a nominee within 30 days after the rejection or vacancy occurring, as applicable. The legislative body receiving the referral must follow the regular appointment process for approving the nominee except the committee resolution must be made within 15 legislative days instead of calendar days as under the initial process. If the nominee is approved by a resolution within 30 calendar days after the submission, he or she serves at the commission's pleasure, but for no longer than the original appointment's remaining term of office. If the legislative body rejects the nomination within that period, SEEC must generally submit a new nomination.

If a nomination is submitted less than 30 days before the General Assembly's constitutionally required adjournment date and the legislative chamber does not act on the nomination, or if a vacancy occurs while the legislature is not in session, then the commission may fill the position until the sixth Wednesday of the next regular legislative session. At the beginning of that session, SEEC must submit a nominee, and the legislature must follow the process outlined above for when a vacancy occurs during a regular session.

The bill prohibits someone who was nominated and rejected by the legislature from serving as executive director during the legislative term in which he or she was rejected.

§§ 10-11 — CONTRIBUTION AND EXPENDITURE EXEMPTIONS

Increases the amount an individual or group may spend on certain events for invitations, food, and beverages without being subject to certain campaign finance requirements

Generally, state law subjects "expenditures" and "contributions" by candidate, party, and political committees to campaign finance reporting requirements, with certain exemptions. These exemptions include certain amounts spent by an individual on behalf of any candidate or committee for invitations, food, and beverages served at the individual's residence or a community room in the facility in which they reside. The invitation, food, and beverage may be provided on

behalf of a candidate committee, regardless of CEP participation, and party, political, or slate committees.

Under current law, the exempted amount for an individual may not exceed \$400 for a single event and \$800 for the calendar year or a single election. Current law also exempts up to \$800 for any event hosted by two or more individuals, subject to the cumulative total noted above, if they own or reside at the residential premises.

The bill increases the maximum for a single event by \$100, to \$500. It also increases the cumulative maximum and the maximum for joint events by \$200, to \$1,000.

BACKGROUND

Related Bills

SB 515, favorably reported by the Government Oversight Committee, makes changes to the inflationary adjustment procedures for QCs.

SB 1407, favorably reported by the Government Oversight Committee, makes changes to the procedures for auditing candidate committees after an election or primary.

HB 7089, favorably reported by the Government Oversight Committee, makes changes to the inflationary adjustment procedures for QCs and amends the definitions of the terms “organization expenditure” and “solicit.”

HB 7222, favorably reported by the Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee, makes changes to the inflationary adjustment procedures for QCs and amends the definitions of the terms “organization expenditure” and “solicit.”

HB 7246, favorably reported by the GAE Committee, makes very similar changes regarding campaign finance definitions, political advertisements, SEEC audits and authority, and SEEC executive director appointments, but it does not have provisions modifying the CEP inflation adjustments.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Oversight Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 12 Nay 0 (03/18/2025)