

Government Administration and Elections Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-7222

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORMS.

Vote Date: 3/26/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/21/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Government Administration and Elections Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

There has been a growing concern for more transparency and accountability for those participating in the election process. This bill seeks to provide clarity to current statutes and make technical changes that would facilitate easier implementation. There have been concerns over the liability of using campaign monies. Some campaigns opt to use a consultant who controls access to critical information needed by the treasurers. Under current law, the treasurer would assume liability for the misappropriation of funds if the consultant did not provide the requisite documentation. This would protect treasurers by ensuring that the consultant be held liable for their actions. The bill also seeks to provide clarity over the action of soliciting and clarifying that the person collecting funds be known as the collector, since one can solicit and not be a solicitor. This bill also adjusts the timing of the CPI for candidates receiving grants as the current timing can cause problems to candidates receiving funds before any adjustments are made.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Expressed

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Shannon Kief, State Elections Enforcement Commission:

There are two proposals in this bill that the Commission has been making for quite some time. Adjusting the Citizens' Election Program to be easier to participate in for treasurers is fairer for candidates and easier to understand. Renaming solicitor as a collector reduces

confusion and helps people better understand who is collecting the contributions. In the CEP, the treasurer performs critical oversight functions with public funds. The treasurers ensure,

- **that these monies were used only to pay for permissible expenditures**
- **that payments for goods and services were not in excess of the usual and normal charge**
- **that there was transparency and accountability through public reporting**
- **that the expenditure limit to which each CEP committee agrees to was strictly upheld**

The bill's language protects treasurers by placing liability where it belongs on campaign consultants. We agree with the bill clearing up issues by the timing of the consumer price indexing of qualifying contributions and the amount required to apply for a grant. The existing timing creates problems for those that begin fundraising before the adjustments are made. Refunds become an issue for treasurers, and they must then fundraise in waves. This proposal fixes that by changing the timing of adjustments only for the amounts required by candidates and the contribution amount. It does not change the timing of adjustments. Candidates can now file their CEP Form 10 earlier.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

The following expressed uncharacterized opposition.

Linda Dalessio

Gus Stanley

Reported by: Pamela Bianca

Date: April 2, 2025