

Government Administration and Elections Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-953

AN ACT REDEFINING "STATE CONTRACTOR", "PROSPECTIVE STATE CONTRACTOR" AND "SUBCONTRACTOR" TO EXCLUDE STATUTORILY RECOGNIZED INDIAN TRIBES OF THIS STATE FOR PURPOSES OF

Title: CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS.

Vote Date: 3/12/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/7/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Government Administration and Elections Committee

CO-SPONSORS OF BILL:

Sen. Catherine Osten, District 19

Rep. Anthony Nolan, District 39

Rep. Derell Wilson, District 46

REASONS FOR BILL:

There is a perceived discrepancy in current campaign finance law relating to tribal entities. Under current law, for the purposes of campaign finance, it appears that state and federally recognized tribal entities could be mistakenly classified, not as a governmental entity, but as a contractor, subcontractor, or prospective contractor. This bill would seek to exempt the state tribes from campaign finance laws that are applicable to state contractors. This would change the limits on campaign contributions, among other things, that these tribes are currently under. This change would bring the application of these laws on state tribes in line with how it applies to municipalities and other government officials within the state.

REASONS FOR BILL: The substitute language makes technical changes regarding tribal authority to provide clarity.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Shannon Clark Kief, State Elections Enforcement Commission:

The exemptions this bill seeks to make would match current law that excludes municipalities, political subdivisions of the state, the United States Department of the Navy, and the United States Department of Defense from the definition of contractor.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Senator Cathy Osten, Connecticut General Assembly:

This bill is a matter of fairness. It will place the state's tribes on par with other governmental entities.

Jody Cummings, General Counsel to Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation:

Currently, there are limited instances of contracts between MPTN and Connecticut or its agencies. MPTN is not currently on equal footing with other governmental entities located in the State of Connecticut regarding contracts though the language currently existing in the General Statutes demonstrates that the General Assembly does not impose "contractor" restrictions on governmental entities and elected officials.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

No opinions expressed.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

No opinions expressed.

Reported by: Aston Foley

Date: 03/13/2025