



Substitute Senate Bill No. 1405

Public Act No. 25-26

***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:

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 Subdivisions (25) and (26) of section 9-601 of the general statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

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

(A) The preparation, display or mailing or other distribution of a party candidate listing, including the electronic sharing, posting or forwarding of content created by a candidate committee or a party committee, legislative caucus committee or legislative leadership committee on behalf of a candidate, the use of a personal electronic mail list or an existing electronic mail account for such purposes and other similar de minimis activity that may or may not be related to fundraising. As used in this subparagraph, "party candidate listing" means any communication that meets the following criteria: (i) The communication lists the name or names of candidates for election to

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public office, (ii) the communication is distributed through public advertising such as broadcast stations, cable television, newspapers or similar media, or through direct mail, telephone, electronic mail, publicly accessible sites on the Internet or personal delivery, and (iii) the communication is made to promote the success or defeat of any candidate or slate of candidates seeking the nomination for election, or election or for the purpose of aiding or promoting the success or defeat of any referendum question or the success or defeat of any political party, provided such communication is not a solicitation for or on behalf of a candidate committee;

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

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

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

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

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

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

(a) No individual shall make or incur any expenditure with the consent of, in coordination with or in consultation with any candidate, candidate committee or candidate's agent, no group of two or more individuals acting together that receives funds or makes or incurs expenditures not exceeding one thousand dollars in the aggregate and has not formed a political committee shall make or incur any expenditure, and no candidate or committee shall make or incur any expenditure including an organization expenditure for a party candidate listing, as defined in subparagraph (A) of subdivision (25) of

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section 9-601, as amended by this act, for any written, typed or other printed communication, [or] any web-based, written communication or any text message communication, which promotes the success or defeat of any candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or election or promotes or opposes any political party or solicits funds to benefit any political party or committee unless such communication bears upon its face as a disclaimer (1) the words "paid for by" and the following: (A) In the case of such an individual, the name and address of such individual; (B) [in the case of a committee other than a party committee, the name of the committee and its treasurer; (C)] in the case of a [party] committee, the name of the committee; or [(D)] (C) in the case of a group of two or more individuals that receives funds or makes or incurs expenditures not exceeding one thousand dollars in the aggregate and has not formed a political committee, the name of the group and the name and address of its agent, and (2) the words "approved by" and the following: (A) In the case of an individual, group or committee other than a candidate committee making or incurring an expenditure with the consent of, in coordination with or in consultation with any candidate, candidate committee or candidate's agent, the name of the candidate; or (B) in the case of a candidate committee, the name of the candidate. For any text message communication, the appearance of such a disclaimer in an initial text message or the display of a link within the body of such message to an Internet web site where such a disclaimer appears shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of this subsection.

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

(1) No candidate or candidate committee or exploratory committee established by a candidate shall make or incur any expenditure for television advertising or Internet video advertising, which promotes the success of such candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or election or the defeat of another candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or election, unless, as a disclaimer, (A) [at the end of] during

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such advertising there appears simultaneously, for a period of not less than four seconds, (i) a clearly identifiable photographic or similar image of the candidate making such expenditure, and (ii) a clearly readable printed statement identifying such candidate [,] and indicating that such candidate has approved the advertising, [and (iii) a simultaneous, personal audio message, in the following form: "I am (candidate's name) and I approved this message",] and (B) the candidate's name and image appear in [, and the candidate's voice is contained in,] the narrative of the advertising, before the end of such advertising;

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

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

(c) No business entity, organization, association, committee, or group of two or more individuals who have joined solely to promote the

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success or defeat of a referendum question shall make or incur any expenditure for any written, typed or other printed communication which promotes the success or defeat of any referendum question unless such communication bears upon its face, as a disclaimer, the words "paid for by" and the following: (1) In the case of a business entity, organization or association, the name of the business entity, organization or association and the name of its chief executive officer or equivalent, and in the case such communication is made during the ninety-day period immediately prior to the referendum, such communication shall also bear on its face the names of the five persons who made the five largest aggregate covered transfers to such business entity, organization or association during the twelve-month period immediately prior to such referendum. The communication shall also state that additional information about the business entity, organization or association making such communication may be found on the State Elections Enforcement Commission's Internet web site; (2) [in the case of a political committee, the name of the committee and the name of its treasurer; (3)] in the case of a political committee or a party committee, the name of the committee; or [(4)] (3) in the case of such a group of two or more individuals, the name of the group and the name and address of its agent.

Sec. 3. Subdivision (5) of subsection (a) of section 9-7b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

(5) (A) To inspect or audit at any reasonable time and upon reasonable notice the accounts or records of any treasurer or principal treasurer, except as provided for in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, as required by chapter 155 or 157 and to audit any such election, primary or referendum held within the state; provided, (i) (I) not later than two months preceding the day of an election at which a candidate is seeking election, the commission shall complete any audit

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it has initiated in the absence of a complaint that involves a committee of the same candidate from a previous election, and (II) during the two-month period preceding the day of an election at which a candidate is seeking election, the commission shall not initiate an audit in the absence of a complaint that involves a committee of the same candidate from a previous election, and (ii) the commission shall not audit any caucus, as defined in subdivision (1) of section 9-372.

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

(C) The commission shall notify, in writing, any committee of a candidate for an office in the general election, or of any candidate who had a primary for nomination to any such office, of its selection for an audit not later than May thirty-first of the year immediately following such election. In no case shall the commission audit any such candidate committee that the commission fails to provide notice to in accordance with this subparagraph.

(D) Not later than twelve months after the selection of candidate committees through the lottery described in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, the commission shall complete the audit of each candidate committee so selected and issue the commission's findings. Not later than January 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the commission shall submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly

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having cognizance of matters relating to government oversight, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, concerning whether there were any audits during the preceding calendar year that the commission was unable to complete during such twelve-month period and, if so, the reasons for such inability to complete such audits;

Sec. 4. Subdivision (14) of subsection (a) of section 9-7b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

(14) To (A) adopt and publish regulations and issue declaratory rulings pursuant to chapter 54 to carry out the provisions of section 9-7a, as amended by this act, this section, and chapters 155 and 157, [; to] (B) issue upon request and publish advisory opinions in the Connecticut Law Journal upon the requirements of chapters 155 and 157, (C) subject to the provisions of subsection (c) of this section, issue and publish guidance documents relating to the requirements of chapters 155 and 157, and [to] (D) make recommendations to the General Assembly concerning suggested revisions of the election laws, except that the commission shall not issue any declaratory ruling or advisory opinion relating to the provisions of chapter 157 during the one-hundred-eighty-day period immediately preceding a state election, provided nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to limit the commission's ability during such period to provide general guidance and clarification relating to the provisions of chapter 157;

Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) On and after January 1, 2026, the State Elections Enforcement Commission shall (1) issue and publish a complete and detailed list of all documentation and internal records that a treasurer of a qualified candidate committee, as defined in section 9-700 of the general statutes, is required to maintain and furnish for the purpose of complying with any audit conducted by the commission pursuant to subdivision (5) of subsection (a) of section 9-7b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, and (2) include such list in each

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guidance document that exceeds forty pages in length, or the equivalent thereof for nonpaginated material, relating to the requirements of chapter 157 of the general statutes issued and published by the commission. Such list shall consist only of documentation and internal records that are required by statute, regulation, declaratory ruling or advisory opinion to be so maintained and furnished. No treasurer shall be liable for failing to maintain or furnish any documentation or internal record that is not contained in such list.

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

(NEW) (c) (1) On and after July 1, 2025, prior to the issuance and publication of any new guidance document that exceeds forty pages in length, or the equivalent thereof for nonpaginated material, relating to the requirements of chapters 155 and 157, or the revision of any such existing guidance document, the commission shall submit such guidance document to each of the four legislative leaders, as defined in section 4-9d, and to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to government oversight, which may hold a hearing on such guidance document within thirty days after the date of submittal to such committee.

(2) For the purposes of this subsection, "guidance document" (A) means a document or material that provides general guidance relating to the provisions of chapters 155 and 157, (B) includes any guidebook, factsheet, document containing frequently asked questions, newsletter and training module, including, but not limited to, any presentation deck or slide, and (C) excludes any regulation, declaratory ruling and advisory opinion.

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

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(b) (1) (A) For elections for the office of Governor or Lieutenant Governor held in [2022, and thereafter] 2026, the aggregate contribution amounts in subdivision (1) or (2) [, as applicable,] of subsection (a) of this section, as applicable, shall be adjusted by the State Elections Enforcement Commission not later than January 15, [2022, and quadrennially thereafter] 2026, in accordance with any change in the consumer price index for all urban consumers as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the period beginning on January 1, 2017, and ending on December thirty-first in the year preceding the year in which said adjustment is to be made.

(B) For elections for the office of Governor or Lieutenant Governor held in 2030, and thereafter, the aggregate contribution amounts in subdivision (1) or (2) of subsection (a) of this section, as applicable, shall be adjusted by the State Elections Enforcement Commission not later than December 15, 2026, and quadrennially thereafter, in accordance with any change in the consumer price index for all urban consumers as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the period beginning on December 1, 2016, and ending on November thirtieth in the year in which said adjustment is to be made.

(2) (A) For elections for the office of Attorney General, State Comptroller, State Treasurer or Secretary of the State held in [2018, and thereafter] 2026, the aggregate contribution amounts in subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of this section shall be adjusted by the State Elections Enforcement Commission not later than January 15, [2018, and quadrennially thereafter] 2026, in accordance with any change in the consumer price index for all urban consumers as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the period beginning on January 1, 2017, and ending on December thirty-first in the year preceding the year in which said adjustment is to

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be made.

(B) For elections for the office of Attorney General, State Comptroller, State Treasurer or Secretary of the State held in 2030, and thereafter, the aggregate contribution amounts in subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of this section shall be adjusted by the State Elections Enforcement Commission not later than December 15, 2026, and quadrennially thereafter, in accordance with any change in the consumer price index for all urban consumers as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the period beginning on December 1, 2016, and ending on November thirtieth in the year in which said adjustment is to be made.

(3) (A) [Except as provided in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, for] For elections for the office of state senator or state representative held in 2018, and thereafter until December 31, 2025, the aggregate contribution amounts in subdivision (3) or (4) [, as applicable,] of subsection (a) of this section, as applicable, shall be adjusted by the State Elections Enforcement Commission not later than January 15, 2018, and biennially thereafter until December 31, 2025, in accordance with any change in the consumer price index for all urban consumers as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the period beginning on January 1, 2017, and ending on December thirty-first in the year preceding the year in which said adjustment is to be made.

(B) For elections for the office of state senator or state representative held in [2024] 2026, and thereafter, the aggregate contribution amounts in subdivision (3) or (4) [, as applicable,] of subsection (a) of this section, as applicable, shall be adjusted by the State Elections Enforcement Commission not later than [January 15, 2024] December 15, 2025, and biennially thereafter, in accordance with any change in the consumer price index for all urban consumers as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the period

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beginning on [January 1, 2017] December 1, 2016, and ending on [December 31, 2021] November thirtieth in the year in which said adjustment is to be made.

(c) (1) [For] (A) Subject to the provisions of subdivision (3) of this subsection, for elections for the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State Comptroller, State Treasurer or Secretary of the State held in [2022, and thereafter] 2026, the two-hundred-fifty-dollar maximum individual contribution amount in subdivision (1) or (2) [as applicable,] of subsection (a) of this section, as applicable, shall be adjusted by the State Elections Enforcement Commission not later than January 15, [2022, and quadrennially thereafter] 2026, in accordance with any change in the consumer price index for all urban consumers as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the period beginning on January 1, 2017, and ending on December thirty-first in the year preceding the year in which said adjustment is to be made.

(B) Subject to the provisions of subdivision (3) of this subsection, for elections for the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State Comptroller, State Treasurer or Secretary of the State held in 2030, and thereafter, the two-hundred-fifty-dollar maximum individual contribution amount in subdivision (1) or (2) of subsection (a) of this section, as applicable, shall be adjusted by the State Elections Enforcement Commission not later than December 15, 2026, and quadrennially thereafter, in accordance with any change in the consumer price index for all urban consumers as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the period beginning on December 1, 2016, and ending on November thirtieth in the year in which said adjustment is to be made.

(2) [For] (A) Subject to the provisions of subdivision (3) of this subsection, for elections for the office of state senator or state representative held in 2020, and thereafter until December 31, 2025, the

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two-hundred-fifty-dollar maximum individual contribution amount in subdivision (3) or (4) [as applicable,] of subsection (a) of this section, as applicable, shall be adjusted by the State Elections Enforcement Commission not later than January 15, 2020, and biennially thereafter until December 31, 2025, in accordance with any change in the consumer price index for all urban consumers as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the period beginning on January 1, 2017, and ending on December thirty-first in the year preceding the year in which said adjustment is to be made.

(B) Subject to the provisions of subdivision (3) of this subsection, for elections for the office of state senator or state representative held in 2026, and thereafter, the two-hundred-fifty-dollar maximum individual contribution amount in subdivision (3) or (4) of subsection (a) of this section, as applicable, shall be adjusted by the State Elections Enforcement Commission not later than December 15, 2025, and biennially thereafter, in accordance with any change in the consumer price index for all urban consumers as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the period beginning on December 1, 2016, and ending on November thirtieth in the year in which said adjustment is to be made.

(3) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, on and after December 15, 2025, the maximum individual contribution amount resulting from any adjustment made by the State Elections Enforcement Commission, pursuant to subdivision (1) or (2) of this subsection, as applicable, shall remain in effect until the immediately following adjustment is made by the commission, at which time a new maximum individual contribution amount shall take effect.

(B) In the event that any adjustment made by the State Elections Enforcement Commission, pursuant to subdivision (1) or (2) of this subsection, as applicable, results in a new maximum individual contribution amount that would be less than the maximum individual

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contribution amount that resulted from the immediately preceding adjustment, (i) such new maximum individual contribution amount shall not take effect, and (ii) the maximum individual contribution amount that resulted from the immediately preceding adjustment shall remain in effect until the next adjustment made by the commission pursuant to subdivision (1) or (2) of this subsection, as applicable.

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

(e) (1) The following shall not be deemed to be qualifying contributions under subsection (a) of this section and shall be returned to the contributor by the treasurer of the candidate committee [to the contributor or transmitted to the State Elections Enforcement Commission for deposit in the Citizens' Election Fund] in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (2) of subsection (d) of section 9-706, as amended by this act, or donated to a charitable organization which is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding internal revenue code of the United States, as amended from time to time:

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

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

[(3)] (C) A contribution under subdivision (1) or (2) of subsection (a) of this section from an individual who does not reside in the state, in

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excess of the applicable limit on contributions from out-of-state individuals in subsection (a) of this section; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(4) The candidate committee has [returned] taken reasonable efforts to return all contributions or portions of contributions that do not meet the criteria for qualifying contributions under section 9-704, as amended by this act, and has transmitted all excess qualifying contributions to the Citizens' Election Fund;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(d) (1) In accordance with the provisions of subsection (g) of this section, the commission shall review the application [,] and determine

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whether [(1)] (A) the candidate committee for the applicant has received the required qualifying contributions, [(2)] (B) in the case of an application for a grant from the fund for a convention campaign, the applicant has met the applicable condition under subsection (a) of this section for applying for such grant and complied with the provisions of subsections (b) and (c) of this section, [(3)] (C) in the case of an application for a grant from the fund for a primary campaign, the applicant has met the applicable condition under subsection (a) of this section for applying for such grant and complied with the provisions of subsections (b) and (c) of this section, [(4)] (D) in the case of an application for a grant from the fund for a general election campaign, the applicant has met the applicable condition under subsection (a) of this section for applying for such grant and complied with the provisions of subsections (b) and (c) of this section, and [(5)] (E) in the case of an application by a minor party or petitioning party candidate for a grant from the fund for a general election campaign, the applicant qualifies as an eligible minor party candidate or an eligible petitioning party candidate, whichever is applicable.

(2) During such review of the application:

(A) If the commission deems a contribution received by the candidate committee not to be a qualifying contribution, the commission shall advise the treasurer of the candidate committee of such determination and cite the applicable reason and provision of law for such determination and shall return the contribution to such treasurer based on the information provided on the applicable contribution certification form;

(B) For purposes of deeming a contribution a qualifying contribution, there shall be a presumption that information provided on a contribution certification form is true and correct, which presumption may only be rebutted by proof to the contrary based on a prior investigative finding of the commission; and

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

(3) If the commission approves an application, the commission shall determine the amount of the grant payable to the candidate committee for the applicant pursuant to section 9-705 from the fund, and notify the State Comptroller and the candidate of such candidate committee of such amount. In so notifying the State Comptroller, the commission shall (A) ensure that the qualified candidate committee of an applicant is entitled to a full grant for the general election campaign only if (i) the applicant's written certification under subsection (b) of this section affirms that such committee received the required qualifying contributions under section 9-704, as amended by this act, prior to the seventieth day before the election, and (ii) the cumulative itemized accounting under subsection (c) of this section demonstrates that the applicant reasonably believes such written certification to be true and correct, and (B) advise the State Comptroller accordingly. If the timing of the commission's approval of the grant for a primary campaign or general election campaign in relation to the Secretary of the State's determination of ballot status is such that the commission cannot determine whether the qualified candidate committee is entitled to the applicable full initial grant for the primary or election or the applicable partial grant for the primary or election, as the case may be, the commission shall approve the lesser applicable partial initial grant. The commission shall then authorize the payment of the remaining portion of the applicable primary campaign or general election campaign grant after the commission has knowledge of the circumstances regarding the ballot status of the opposing candidates in such primary or election. Not later than thirty days following notification by the commission in the

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case of a convention campaign grant, or not later than two business days following notification by the commission in the case of any other grant, the State Comptroller shall draw an order on the State Treasurer for payment of any such approved amount to the qualified candidate committee from the fund.

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

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

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

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

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

(2) (A) On or before March 1, 2027, and quadrennially thereafter, the commission shall, with the advice and consent of both houses of the General Assembly, appoint an executive director in the manner prescribed in this subdivision, to serve at the pleasure of the commission but not longer than four years after such appointment, unless reappointed under the provisions of this subdivision.

(B) On or before February 1, 2027, and quadrennially thereafter, the commission shall submit a nomination for executive director to both houses of the General Assembly. Both houses shall immediately refer the nomination to the committee on executive nominations, which shall report thereon by resolution within fifteen calendar days from the date of reference. The General Assembly, by resolution, shall confirm or reject the nomination. If confirmed, the nominee shall take office on the first day of March in the year in which the appointment is submitted. If either house of the General Assembly rejects the nomination before the first day of March in the year in which it is submitted, the procedure prescribed in subparagraph (C) of this subdivision shall be followed.

(C) If a vacancy occurs in the office of executive director while the General Assembly is in regular session, the commission shall, not later than thirty days after the occurrence of the vacancy, submit its nomination to fill the vacancy to both houses of the General Assembly. Both houses shall immediately refer the nomination to the committee on executive nominations, which shall report thereon by resolution within

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fifteen legislative days from the date of reference. The General Assembly, by resolution, shall confirm or reject such nomination. If the General Assembly confirms the nomination within thirty calendar days after it is submitted, the nominee shall forthwith take office to serve at the pleasure of the commission but not longer than the original appointee could have served under his or her appointment. If either house of the General Assembly rejects the nomination within thirty calendar days after it is submitted, the commission shall, within thirty calendar days, submit another nomination to the General Assembly, provided, if any nomination is submitted less than thirty calendar days before the date established by the Constitution for adjournment of the General Assembly, and the General Assembly fails to confirm or reject the nomination before such adjournment on said date, the procedure prescribed in subparagraph (D) of this subdivision shall be followed.

(D) If a vacancy occurs in the office of executive director while the General Assembly is not in regular session, it shall be filled by the commission until the sixth Wednesday of the next session of the General Assembly. At the beginning of the next regular session of the General Assembly, the commission shall submit the name of the vacancy appointee to the General Assembly and the procedure prescribed in subparagraph (C) of this subdivision shall be followed.

(E) No person whose name has been submitted by the commission and whose nomination has been rejected by resolution of the General Assembly shall serve in the office of executive director during the term of the General Assembly which rejected him or her.

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

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

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

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

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

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

(5) The use of real or personal property, a portion or all of the cost of invitations and the cost of food or beverages, voluntarily provided by an individual to a candidate, including a nonparticipating or participating candidate under the Citizens' Election Program, or to a party, political or slate committee, in rendering voluntary personal services at the individual's residential premises or a community room in the individual's residence facility, to the extent that the cumulative value of the invitations, food or beverages provided by an individual on behalf of any candidate or committee does not exceed [four] five hundred dollars with respect to any single event or does not exceed

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[eight hundred] one thousand dollars for any such event hosted by two or more individuals, provided at least one such individual owns or resides at the residential premises, and further provided the cumulative value of the invitations, food or beverages provided by an individual on behalf of any such candidate or committee does not exceed [eight hundred] one thousand dollars with respect to a calendar year or single election, as the case may be;

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

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

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

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

(10) (A) The purchase of advertising space which clearly identifies the purchaser, in a program for a fund-raising affair sponsored by the candidate committee of a candidate for an office of a municipality,

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provided the cumulative purchase of such space does not exceed two hundred fifty dollars from any single such candidate or the candidate's committee with respect to any single election campaign if the purchaser is a business entity or fifty dollars for purchases by any other person;

(B) The purchase of advertising space which clearly identifies the purchaser, in a program for a fund-raising affair or on signs at a fund-raising affair sponsored by a party committee or a political committee, other than an exploratory committee, provided the cumulative purchase of such space does not exceed two hundred fifty dollars from any single party committee or a political committee, other than an exploratory committee, in any calendar year if the purchaser is a business entity or fifty dollars for purchases by any other person. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subparagraph, the following may not purchase advertising space in a program for a fund-raising affair or on signs at a fund-raising affair sponsored by a party committee or a political committee, other than an exploratory committee: (i) A communicator lobbyist, (ii) a member of the immediate family of a communicator lobbyist, (iii) a state contractor, (iv) a prospective state contractor, or (v) a principal of a state contractor or prospective state contractor. As used in this subparagraph, "state contractor", "prospective state contractor" and "principal of a state contractor or prospective state contractor" have the same meanings as provided in subsection (f) of section 9-612;

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

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

(13) The advance of a security deposit by an individual to a telephone

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company, as defined in section 16-1, for telecommunications service for a committee or to another utility company, such as an electric distribution company, provided the security deposit is refunded to the individual;

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

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

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

(17) The donation of food or beverage by an individual for consumption at a slate, candidate, political committee or party committee meeting, event or activity that is not a fund-raising affair to the extent that the cumulative value of the food or beverages donated by an individual for a single meeting or event does not exceed fifty dollars;

(18) The value associated with the de minimis activity on behalf of a party committee, political committee, slate committee or candidate committee, including for activities including, but not limited to, (A) the creation of electronic or written communications or digital photos or video as part of an electronic file created on a voluntary basis without

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compensation, including, but not limited to, the creation and ongoing content development and delivery of social media on the Internet or telephone, including, but not limited to, the sending or receiving of electronic mail or messages, (B) the posting or display of a candidate's name or group of candidates' names at a town fair, county fair, local festival or similar mass gathering by a party committee, (C) the use of personal property or a service that is customarily attendant to the occupancy of a residential dwelling, or the donation of an item or items of personal property that are customarily used for campaign purposes, by an individual, to a candidate committee, provided the cumulative fair market value of such use of personal property or service or items of personal property does not exceed one hundred dollars in the aggregate for any single election or calendar year, as the case may be;

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

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

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

(22) A communication containing an endorsement on behalf of a candidate for nomination or election to the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, State Treasurer, State Comptroller, Attorney General, state senator or state representative, from a candidate for the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, State Treasurer, State Comptroller, Attorney General, state senator or state representative, provided the candidate (A) making the endorsement is unopposed at the time of the communication, and (B) being endorsed paid for such communication;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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election, as the case may be;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Governor's Action:

Approved June 9, 2025