
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 953

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

SUMMARY

This bill exempts statutorily recognized Indian tribes in this state, as well as any entities or associations created by the tribes and its political subdivisions under tribal law, from certain definitions under a state campaign finance law.

Specifically, it applies to the definitions of “state contractor,” “prospective state contractor,” and “subcontractor” under the state campaign finance law that generally prohibits these contractors from making contributions to statewide and legislative candidates for public office and restricts these candidates from knowingly, willfully, or intentionally accepting contributions from these contractors (see BACKGROUND). Existing law also generally exempts from these definitions (1) municipalities or other political subdivisions of the state, (2) executive or legislative branch employees, and (3) quasi-public employees.

State law statutorily recognizes the Schaghticoke, the Paucatuck Eastern Pequot, the Mashantucket Pequot, the Mohegan, and the Golden Hill Paugussett tribes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

BACKGROUND

Campaign Finance Prohibitions Regarding Contractors

State law generally bans state contractors, prospective state contractors, pre-qualified contractors, subcontractors, and their principals from making contributions to or on behalf of the following

recipients: (1) exploratory or candidate committees for statewide or legislative candidates, (2) political committees authorized to make contributions to or spend on behalf of candidates for statewide or legislative office, or (3) party committees.

Contractors are also prohibited from soliciting contributions for these committees from their employees, subcontractors, or subcontractors' principals. The prohibitions are branch-specific (e.g., a state contractor contracted with the General Assembly may not engage in these prohibited activities for legislative contests).

Relatedly, constitutional officers, legislators, candidates for these offices, and their agents generally may not knowingly, willfully, or intentionally solicit contributions from a prohibited entity for any exploratory, candidate, political, or party committee.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 13 Nay 6 (03/12/2025)