



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 324

February Session, 2026

Substitute House Bill No. 5352

House of Representatives, April 1, 2026

The Committee on Government Oversight reported through REP. DATHAN of the 142nd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE AUTHORITY OF THE STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION AND MANDATORY DISMISSAL OF COMPLAINTS.

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

1 Section 1. Subsection (g) of section 9-7a of the 2026 supplement to the
2 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
3 thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

4 (g) (1) (A) In the case of a written complaint filed with the commission
5 pursuant to section 9-7b, commission staff shall conduct and complete a
6 preliminary examination of such complaint by the fourteenth day
7 following its receipt, at which time such staff shall, at its discretion, (i)
8 dismiss the complaint for failure to allege any substantial violation of
9 state election law supported by evidence, (ii) engage the respondent in
10 discussions in an effort to speedily resolve any matter pertaining to a de
11 minimis violation, or (iii) investigate and docket the complaint for a
12 determination by the commission that probable cause or no probable

13 cause exists for any such violation. If commission staff dismisses a
14 complaint pursuant to subparagraph (A)(i) of this subdivision, such
15 staff shall provide a brief written statement concisely setting forth the
16 reasons for such dismissal. If commission staff engages a respondent
17 pursuant to subparagraph (A)(ii) of this subdivision but is unable to
18 speedily resolve any such matter described in said subparagraph by the
19 forty-fifth day following receipt of the complaint, such staff shall docket
20 such complaint for a determination by the commission that probable
21 cause or no probable cause exists for any violation of state election law.
22 If the commission does not, by the sixtieth day following receipt of the
23 complaint, either issue a decision or render its determination that
24 probable cause or no probable cause exists for any violation of state
25 election laws, the complainant or respondent may apply to the superior
26 court for the judicial district of Hartford for an order to show cause why
27 the commission has not acted upon the complaint and to provide
28 evidence that the commission has unreasonably delayed action.

29 (B) (i) For any complaint received on or after January 1, 2018, if the
30 commission does not, by one year following receipt of such complaint,
31 issue a decision thereon, the commission shall dismiss such complaint,
32 provided the length of time of any delay caused by (I) the commission
33 or commission staff granting any extension or continuance to a
34 respondent prior to the issuance of any such decision, (II) any subpoena
35 issued in connection with such complaint, (III) any litigation in state or
36 federal court related to such complaint, or (IV) any investigation by, or
37 consultation of the commission or commission staff with, the Chief
38 State's Attorney, the Attorney General, the United States Department of
39 Justice or the United States Attorney for Connecticut related to such
40 complaint, shall be added to such one year.

41 (ii) The provisions of subparagraph (B)(i) of this subdivision shall not
42 apply to any complaint received on or after July 1, 2024, that relates to a
43 potential violation of state election law by a foreign national, or to any
44 complaint received on or after October 1, 2026, that relates to a potential
45 violation of any provision of chapter 151.

46 (C) For any complaint received on or after July 1, 2024, if the
47 commission does not, by the ninetieth day following the commission's
48 determination that probable cause exists for any violation of state
49 election laws, issue a decision on such complaint, the commission shall
50 refer such complaint to the Chief State's Attorney pursuant to
51 subdivision (8) of subsection (a) of section 9-7b for further enforcement
52 action. Not later than twelve months after the referral to the Chief State's
53 Attorney of any complaint under this subdivision, or not later than the
54 expiration of the period of time prescribed by section 54-193 for the
55 violation of state election laws alleged in any such complaint, whichever
56 occurs first, the Chief State's Attorney shall submit a report to the joint
57 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of
58 matters relating to elections and the judiciary, in accordance with the
59 provisions of section 11-4a, detailing the status of any enforcement
60 action related to such referred complaint.

61 (2) In the case of a statement filed by the Secretary of the State with
62 the commission pursuant to section 9-7b on or after July 1, 2015, if the
63 commission does not, by the thirtieth day following such filing, make a
64 determination to investigate such statement and, by the ninetieth day
65 following such filing, complete any investigation of such statement and
66 issue a decision, the Secretary may apply to the superior court for the
67 judicial district of Hartford for an order to show cause why the
68 commission has not acted upon the statement and to provide evidence
69 that the commission has unreasonably delayed action.

70 (3) Any judicial proceeding pursuant to subdivision (1) or (2) of this
71 subsection shall be privileged with respect to assignment for trial. The
72 commission shall appear and give appropriate explanation in the
73 matter. The court may, in its discretion, order the commission to: (A)
74 Continue to proceed pursuant to section 9-7b, (B) act by a date certain,
75 or (C) refer the complaint or statement to the Chief State's Attorney.
76 Nothing in this subsection shall require the commission, in any
77 proceeding brought pursuant to this subsection, to disclose records or
78 documents which are not required to be disclosed pursuant to
79 subsection (b) of section 1-210. Nothing in this subsection shall preclude

80 the commission from continuing its investigation or taking any action
81 permitted by section 9-7b, unless otherwise ordered by the court. The
82 commission or any other party may, within seven days after a decision
83 by the court under this subsection, file an appeal of the decision with
84 the Appellate Court.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2026	9-7a(g)

GOS *Joint Favorable Subst.*

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 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Elections Enforcement Commission	GF - Potential Revenue Gain	Minimal	Minimal

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill eliminates the one-year decision deadline for the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) for complaints received after October 1, 2026, regarding certain potential violations under state election law, resulting in a minimal potential revenue gain to SEEC beginning in FY 27. The bill results in a potential revenue gain to the extent that SEEC will no longer end these investigations at the one-year deadline before the work is done, and will issue more decisions, potentially resulting in additional fines imposed.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation and fines imposed.

OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5352

AN ACT CONCERNING THE AUTHORITY OF THE STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION AND MANDATORY DISMISSAL OF COMPLAINTS.

SUMMARY

Existing law generally requires the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) to dismiss a complaint if it does not issue a final decision within one year of receiving it. The deadline may be extended for delays caused by (1) SEEC granting an extension or continuance to the respondent or (2) complaint-related subpoenas, litigation, or investigations by, or consultations with, certain prosecutorial agencies.

This bill exempts from this deadline complaints received on or after October 1, 2026, about potential violations of prohibited acts under state election law. Existing law already exempts complaints regarding potential violations of state election law by foreign nationals.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Oversight Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 12 Nay 0 (03/17/2026)