

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 89
By: Branch, England (Harris)
State Affairs
5/16/2007
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current law subjects general-purpose political committees to civil penalties for a late report of political contributions and expenditures. However, such penalties have the potential to completely eliminate funding for smaller general-purpose committees.

H.B. 89 exempts a general-purpose political committee from civil penalties required to be paid for a late report if the committee did not accept political contributions totaling \$3,000 or more or make or authorize political expenditures totaling that amount or more during the reporting period covered by the report that is subject to the violation or during the two reporting periods preceding the period subject to a violation.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter F, Chapter 254, Election Code, by adding Section 254.164, as follows:

Sec. 254.164. CERTAIN COMMITTEES EXEMPT FROM CIVIL PENALTIES. Prohibits the Texas Ethics Commission (TEC) from imposing a civil penalty on a general-purpose committee for a violation of this chapter if the report filed by the committee that is the subject of the violation discloses that it did not accept political contributions totaling \$3,000 or more, accept political contributions from a single person totaling \$1,000 or more, or make or authorize political expenditures totaling \$3,000 or more during certain reporting periods as set forth in this subsection.

SECTION 2. Requires TEC to submit a report to the legislature on the impacts and effects of Section 254.164, Election Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2007.