

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

C.S.S.B. 2242
By: Zaffirini
State Affairs
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Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Establishing a statewide electronic filing initiative would contribute to efficient and uniform disclosure. It would allow local governing bodies with whom candidates are required to file campaign finance reports to utilize the Texas Ethics Commission (TEC) software for the purposes of increasing transparency in local elections on a voluntary basis. Because it would make campaign finance more transparent, it should function to strengthen public confidence in government.

C.S.S.B. 2242 amends current law relating to the provision of assistance by TEC in the reporting of political contributions and expenditures made in connection with offices of and measures proposed by local governmental entities.

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 Chapter 571, Government Code, by adding Subchapter G, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER G. REPORTING OF POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND EXPENDITURES RELATED TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES AND OFFICERS

Sec. 571.201. **PURPOSE.** Provides that the purpose of this subchapter is to further the objective of fully disclosing information related to political contributions and political expenditures made in connection with offices of and measures proposed by local governmental entities by allowing a local governmental entity or a candidate for or holder of an office of a local governmental entity or a related specific-purpose committee to use the Texas Ethics Commission's (TEC) software and other TEC resources to file reports of political contributions and expenditures required by Title 15 (Regulating Political Funds and Campaigns), Election Code.

Sec. 571.202. **DEFINITIONS.** Defines "local governmental entity," "local government officer," "measure," "political contribution," "political expenditure," and "specific-purpose committee."

Sec. 571.203. **USE OF COMMISSION SOFTWARE AND RESOURCES.** (a) Authorizes TEC, to fulfill the purpose of this subchapter and to facilitate filing of reports of political contributions and expenditures required by Title 15, Election Code, to allow the use of TEC software and resources by a local governmental entity; a local government officer; a candidate for an office of a local governmental entity; or a specific-purpose committee for supporting or opposing a candidate for an office of a local governmental entity, assisting a local government officer, or supporting or opposing a measure proposed by a local governmental entity.

(b) Authorizes TEC to provide assistance to a local governmental entity, a local government officer, a candidate for an office of a local governmental entity, or a specific-purpose committee by developing software to facilitate electronic filing of reports of political contributions and expenditures; maintaining reports of

political contributions and expenditures for electronic publishing and filing; and providing public access through TEC's Internet site website to electronic reports of political contributions and expenditures filed by a local governmental entity, a local government officer, a candidate for an office of a local governmental entity, or a specific-purpose committee for supporting or opposing a candidate for an office of a local governmental entity, assisting a local government officer, or supporting or opposing a measure proposed by a local governmental entity.

(c) Authorizes TEC to enter into an intergovernmental contract with a local governmental entity to provide the assistance described by Subsection (b).

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act does not make an appropriation. Provides that a provision in this Act that creates a new governmental program, creates a new entitlement, or imposes a new duty on a governmental entity is not mandatory during a fiscal period for which the legislature has not made a specific appropriation to implement the provision.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2009.