

HCS SB 689 -- ETHICS

SPONSOR: Scott (May)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Elections by a vote of 9 to 2.

This substitute changes the laws regarding lobbyist reporting requirements and campaign contribution disclosures for public officials.

"Elected local government official lobbyists," defined as persons specifically employed for the purpose of influencing local officials in counties, cities, towns, or villages with an operating budget of over \$10 million, are required to meet the same reporting requirements as those who lobby state officials.

Lobbyist are required to file reports of lobbying activities no later than January 5 of each year or within five days after beginning lobbying activities.

Certain candidates for elective office are required to file financial interest statements no later than March 31 or within 10 days of filing for office, whichever is later, for the preceding calendar year. Candidates for election in April will file the statements by January 31 for the preceding calendar year. Candidates nominated by a political caucus will file the statements within 10 days of nomination. The Missouri Ethics Commission will be the filing officer in any case where no filing officer is designated for the filing of a financial interest statement. Any document postmarked by midnight of the day designated for filing will be deemed as timely filed.

Notice requirements are also revised regarding the assessment of late fees by the commission. Individuals may appeal commission actions to the circuit court of Cole County instead of the Administrative Hearing Commission.

Every committee which is required to file a statement of organization may exclude bank account numbers when the report is filed with an officer other than the commission. All records of committee receipts and expenditures will be available for inspection by the commission instead of the current campaign finance review board. Written reports are not required for any candidate whose officer for filing is the commission if the report is filed electronically with the commission.

The substitute reorganizes sections of law regarding reporting requirements for out-of-state committees and for candidates nominated by a political party committee. Currently, a continuing committee is required to file electronic reports if the committee makes contributions of more than \$15,000. The substitute changes the amount to \$5,000 and includes political

party committees and campaign committees.

An individual who seeks nomination to a public office by nomination of a political party committee will be subject to campaign finance disclosure requirements, with certain changes regarding the reporting dates. A section of law that requires the commission to print a summary of all laws over which the commission has enforcement power is repealed.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Income on General Revenue Fund of \$10,000 in FY 2007, FY 2008, and FY 2009. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2007, FY 2008, and FY 2009.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill is a necessary and useful tool for regulating lobbying activities.

Testifying for the bill was Senator Scott.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the registration of local government lobbyists could inadvertently make a large number of unsuspecting citizens criminals.

Testifying against the bill was Missouri Municipal League.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that it makes needed technical changes to the election laws.

Others testifying on the bill was Missouri Ethics Commission.

Jason Glahn, Legislative Analyst