

SB 1038 -- CAMPAIGN FINANCE

SPONSOR: Shields (Cox)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Elections by a vote of 4 to 2.

This bill changes the laws regarding campaign finance. In its main provisions, the bill:

(1) Repeals campaign contribution limits for certain candidates running for office;

(2) Limits individual contributions to a candidate for statewide elected office, judge, member of the General Assembly, or certain municipal office to \$325 as it relates to the exemption to filing requirements. The filing of a statement of organization or disclosure reports is not required if contributions and expenditures for a single election are less than \$500 and no one person makes a contribution of more than \$325;

(3) Requires individuals and committees to file electronic campaign disclosure reports with the Missouri Ethics Commission within 48 hours of receiving a contribution exceeding \$5,000;

(4) Requires legislative and senatorial district committees to retain a single address in their district for receipt of contributions and requires campaign treasurers to reside in the district or county where the committee sits;

(5) Requires out-of-state committees that make contributions involving Missouri candidates or election issues to report the names of their contributors even if contributions to the out-of-state committee were not made for the purpose of influencing any particular election; and

(6) Changes the penalty for improperly reporting campaign contributions and expenditures to the commission from twice the amount of the incorrect contribution or expenditure up to \$5,000 to a penalty equal to the amount of the improperly reported contribution or expenditure with no maximum cap.

The bill contains an emergency clause.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2009, FY 2010, and FY 2011.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill reinstates the elimination of campaign contribution limits enacted by HB 1900 in 2006. Repealing campaign contribution limits is constitutional

under Trout v. Missouri, and the bill does not re-enact the unconstitutional time limits on contributions that were struck down. The bill also creates greater transparency for campaign donations so that large donations are easily tracked.

Testifying for the bill was Senator Shields.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that greater transparency into the political process is an improvement.

Testifying on the bill was Missouri Farm Bureau.