

HB 1727 -- Ethics, Lobbying, and Campaign Contributions

Sponsor: Zimmerman

This bill changes the laws regarding ethics, lobbying, and campaign contributions.

ETHICS AND LOBBYING

The bill:

(1) Prohibits members of the General Assembly from contracting with or soliciting any other member for the purpose of securing services for political campaigning, fundraising, or consulting that in any way relates to the election of any state or federal office;

(2) Prohibits an elected official or his or her staff from registering or acting as a lobbyist for a period of one year after leaving office or employment of the state or any political subdivision. These officials and their staff are allowed to act as lobbyists for governmental entities immediately upon leaving office or employment;

(3) Prohibits any person from concurrently serving as a treasurer or deputy treasurer on more than one committee. Any person, upon a determination by the Missouri Ethics Commission that he or she is the treasurer or deputy treasurer of more than one committee, must vacate his or her position on all committees; and

(4) Prohibits a committee from transferring any funds received by the committee to any other committee as specified in Chapter 130, RSMo, except that a continuing committee may transfer funds to a candidate committee. A surcharge penalty payable to the commission of \$1,000 plus the amount of the nonallowable contribution is established for a violation of the committee-to-committee transfer prohibition by any committee, and the receiving committee is required to return the nonallowable contribution to the contributing committee within 10 business days. Any knowing and intentional transfer of funds in violation of this section will be a class A misdemeanor, and a willful transfer made with the intent to conceal the actual source or nature of the funds will be a class D felony.

CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

Beginning January 1, 2011, the bill:

(1) Limits campaign donations from any person other than the

candidate in any one election to candidates for statewide office to \$2,000; for state senator, \$1,000; and for state representative, \$500. Contribution limits for local candidate donations are based upon population and are specified in the bill. Candidate committees will be exempt from these limits;

(2) Requires contributions from children younger than 14 years of age to be counted equally toward their parents' contribution limits or, in the case of a single parent, counted fully against that parent's contribution;

(3) Establishes a surcharge penalty payable to the Missouri Ethics Commission of \$1,000 plus the amount of the nonallowable contribution for a violation of the campaign contribution limits by any committee and requires the candidate to return the nonallowable contribution to the contributor within 10 business days; and

(4) Requires a separate accounting procedure for funds used before January 1, 2011, and allows the use of those funds based on the current laws.