

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5367

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As of February 7, 2005

**Title:** An act relating to use of public funds for political purposes.

**Brief Description:** Revising limitations on use of public funds for political purposes.

**Sponsors:** Senators Franklin and Kline.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Government Operations & Elections: 2/3/05.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Staff:** Mac Nicholson (786-7445)

**Background:** Initiative 134, passed by the voters in 1992, regulates political contributions, campaign expenditures, and prohibits the use of public funds to finance political campaigns for state or local offices. Prior to the passage of Initiative 134, some local governments had ordinances providing the availability of public funds for political campaigns for municipal offices.

**Summary of Bill:** The prohibition on the use of public funds to finance political campaigns for local offices is eliminated.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** This bill gives cities the ability to make local decisions about campaign funding. The city of Seattle had public funding for campaigns in the late 1970's and 1980's. The program increased the number of candidates seeking election, increased the number of small contributions collected, and minimized the amount of time candidates had to spend on the phone. Initiative 134 killed the program, and Seattle wants the opportunity to bring in back. The program would be created by ordinance and is entirely voluntary.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Sen. Franklin, prime sponsor; David Foster, City of Seattle; Wayne Barnett, Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission.