
HOUSE BILL 2500

State of Washington

62nd Legislature

2012 Regular Session

By Representatives Billig, Hunt, Appleton, Dickerson, Hasegawa, Reykdal, Lias, Ormsby, Sells, Fitzgibbon, Kagi, Miloscia, and Santos

Read first time 01/16/12. Referred to Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs.

1 AN ACT Relating to returning the initiative process to the people
2 by enacting reforms relating to contributions to ballot measure
3 committees; amending RCW 42.17A.125; adding a new section to chapter
4 42.17A RCW; and creating a new section.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes and supports the
7 constitutional right of the people to pass laws through the initiative
8 and referendum process. However in recent years, corporations have
9 hijacked the initiative process to advance their special interests.
10 The total dollar amount raised for initiatives between 2001 and 2010
11 averaged nine million eight hundred thousand dollars per year. In
12 2010, the total amount of money raised for initiatives was sixty
13 million dollars, and in 2011 that total was forty-one million dollars.
14 A single corporation contributed over twenty-two million dollars to
15 support Initiative Measure No. 1183. Less than one thousand dollars
16 for that same initiative was received from individuals. Therefore, the
17 legislature intends to return the initiative process to the people by
18 setting a contribution limit for ballot measure committees.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 42.17A RCW
2 to read as follows:

3 No person may make a contribution to a political committee formed
4 to support or oppose a ballot proposition in excess of one thousand six
5 hundred dollars in the aggregate in a calendar year. No political
6 committee formed to support or oppose a ballot proposition may accept
7 a contribution from any person in excess of one thousand six hundred
8 dollars in the aggregate in a calendar year.

9 The dollar limits in this section must be adjusted according to RCW
10 42.17A.125.

11 **Sec. 3.** RCW 42.17A.125 and 2011 c 60 s 21 are each amended to read
12 as follows:

13 (1) At the beginning of each even-numbered calendar year, the
14 commission shall increase or decrease the dollar amounts in RCW
15 42.17A.005(26), 42.17A.405, 42.17A.410, section 2 of this act,
16 42.17A.445(3), 42.17A.475, and 42.17A.630(1) based on changes in
17 economic conditions as reflected in the inflationary index recommended
18 by the office of financial management. The new dollar amounts
19 established by the commission under this section shall be rounded off
20 to amounts as judged most convenient for public understanding and so as
21 to be within ten percent of the target amount equal to the base amount
22 provided in this chapter multiplied by the increase in the inflationary
23 index since July 2008.

24 (2) The commission may revise, at least once every five years but
25 no more often than every two years, the monetary reporting thresholds
26 and reporting code values of this chapter. The revisions shall be only
27 for the purpose of recognizing economic changes as reflected by an
28 inflationary index recommended by the office of financial management.
29 The revisions shall be guided by the change in the index for the period
30 commencing with the month of December preceding the last revision and
31 concluding with the month of December preceding the month the revision
32 is adopted. As to each of the three general categories of this
33 chapter, reports of campaign finance, reports of lobbyist activity, and
34 reports of the financial affairs of elected and appointed officials,
35 the revisions shall equally affect all thresholds within each category.
36 The revisions authorized by this subsection shall reflect economic

1 changes from the time of the last legislative enactment affecting the
2 respective code or threshold.

3 (3) Revisions made in accordance with subsections (1) and (2) of
4 this section shall be adopted as rules under chapter 34.05 RCW.

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