



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 607

January Session, 2009

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1107

Senate, April 9, 2009

The Committee on Government Administration and Elections reported through SEN. SLOSSBERG of the 14th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRONIC FILING OF CAMPAIGN REPORTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 9-675 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2010*):

3 (a) The State Elections Enforcement Commission shall (1) create a
4 [software] web-based program [or programs] for the preparation of
5 financial disclosure statements required by section 9-608, and (2)
6 prescribe the standard reporting format and specifications for other
7 software programs created by vendors for such purpose. No software
8 program created by a vendor may be used for the electronic
9 submission of such financial disclosure statements, until the
10 commission determines that the program provides for the standard
11 reporting format, and complies with the specifications, which are
12 prescribed under subdivision (2) of this subsection for vendor software
13 programs. The commission shall provide training in the use of the

14 [software] web-based program [or programs] created by the
15 commission.

16 (b) [The] On and after April 1, 2010, (1) the campaign treasurer of
17 [the candidate committee for each candidate for nomination or election
18 to the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General,
19 State Comptroller, State Treasurer or Secretary of the State] the
20 candidate committee for each candidate for nomination or election to
21 the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State
22 Comptroller, State Treasurer, Secretary of the State, state senator or
23 state representative or judge of probate or an exploratory committee
24 who raises or spends [two hundred fifty] five thousand dollars or
25 more during a primary or an election campaign; (2) the campaign
26 treasurer of any state central committee, legislative caucus committee
27 or legislative leadership committee; (3) the campaign treasurer of any
28 town committee or any other political committee registered with the
29 commission, that (A) has a balance on hand of five thousand dollars or
30 more as of the last day of the month preceding the statement required
31 to be filed in the month of April, or (B) raised or spent five thousand
32 dollars or more in the preceding regular state election; and (4) any
33 individual, or the campaign treasurer of any committee, that makes or
34 obligates to make an independent expenditure or expenditures and
35 that is required to file a report of such independent expenditure or
36 expenditures in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (2) of
37 subsection (e) of section 9-612 shall file in electronic form all financial
38 disclosure statements required by section 9-608 by [either transmitting
39 disks, tapes or other electronic storage media containing the contents
40 of such statements to the State Elections Enforcement Commission or]
41 transmitting the statements on-line to [said] the commission. Each such
42 campaign treasurer or individual shall use either [(1) a software] (A)
43 the web-based program created by the commission under subdivision
44 (1) of subsection (a) of this section, for all such statements, or [(2)] (B)
45 another software program which provides for the standard reporting
46 format, and complies with the specifications, which are prescribed by
47 the commission under subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of this section,
48 for all such statements. The commission shall accept any statement that

49 uses such web-based program or any such software program. [Once
50 any such candidate committee has raised or spent two hundred fifty
51 thousand dollars or more during an election campaign, all previously
52 filed statements required by said section 9-608, which were not filed in
53 electronic form shall be refiled in such form, using such a software
54 program, not later than the date on which the campaign treasurer of
55 the committee is required to file the next regular statement under said
56 section 9-608.]

57 (c) (1) The campaign treasurer of the candidate committee for any
58 other candidate, as defined in section 9-601, who is required to file the
59 financial disclosure statements required by section 9-608 with the
60 commission but who has not reached the five-thousand-dollar
61 threshold of contributions or expenditures set forth in subdivision (1)
62 of subsection (b) of this section, and (2) the campaign treasurer of any
63 political committee or [party] town committee that does not have a
64 balance on hand of five thousand dollars or more as of the last day of
65 the month preceding the statement required to be filed in the month of
66 April under section 9-608, may file in electronic form any financial
67 disclosure statements required by said section 9-608. [Such filings may
68 be made by either transmitting disks, tapes or other electronic storage
69 media containing the contents of such statements to the proper
70 authority under section 9-603 or transmitting the statements on-line to
71 such proper authority. Each such] The campaign treasurer shall use
72 either (A) [a software] the web-based program created by the
73 commission under subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section, for
74 all such statements filed in electronic form with the commission, or (B)
75 [another] a software program which provides for the standard
76 reporting format, and complies with the specifications, which are
77 prescribed by the commission under subdivision (2) of subsection (a)
78 of this section, for all such statements filed in electronic form [. The
79 proper authority under section 9-603 shall accept any statement that
80 uses any such software program] with the commission.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	January 1, 2010	9-675

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

Provisions of the first sentence of section 1(b) were reorganized and rephrased for statutory consistency, and references to subdivision (1) of subsection (b) and "town committee" in the first sentence of section 1(c) were changed for accuracy. In subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section 1, "or an exploratory committee" was moved to the end of the new language for clarity and consistency.

GAE *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 10 \$	FY 11 \$
Elect. Enforcement Com.	Citizens' Election Fund - Savings	See Below	See Below

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires mandatory electronic filing with the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) for certain committees that maintain a balance exceeding \$5,000 beginning in April 2010. The bill also requires candidates who raise at least \$5,000 to file electronically, effective April 2010. Currently, the SEEC contracts out for the data entry services to manually input these paper reports into the eCRIS, which is the SEEC's online filing system.

It is estimated that over 400 committees would be affected by this bill, resulting in a cost savings to the Citizens' Election Fund account. The data entry services, printing and mailing costs, and storage of these filings is estimated at over \$50 per filing. With multiple filings per year, depending on type of committee or PAC, this requirement may save \$100,000 annually.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above is expected to continue in each subsequent election cycle.

Sources: State Elections Enforcement

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 1107*****AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRONIC FILING OF CAMPAIGN REPORTS.*****SUMMARY:**

By law, candidate committees, political committees (known as PACs), and party committees that raise or spend over \$1,000 during a primary or election campaign, or in a calendar year, whichever is applicable, file periodic campaign finance statements with the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC).

Beginning April 1, 2010, this bill lowers, from \$250,000 to \$5,000, the threshold at which statewide office candidates must file these statements electronically and makes it applicable to all candidates who file with the SEEC. It also subjects the following individuals and committees to the mandatory electronic filing requirement:

1. state central, legislative caucus, and legislative leadership committees;
2. town committees and PACs that register with the SEEC and (a) maintain a balance of \$5,000 or (b) raised or spent \$5,000 or more in the last election; and
3. individuals or committees that make or are obligated to make independent expenditures exceeding \$1,000 in the aggregate.

Under the bill, as under current law, candidate committees that do not reach the threshold in contributions or expenditures may file online. Similarly, party committees and PACs that do not have a \$5,000 balance may file online.

In light of the new online filing system known as eCRIS, the bill

eliminates references to a SEEC-created “software” program, replacing them with a “web-based” program. It retains provisions requiring the SEEC to prescribe a standard reporting format for instances when treasurers choose to submit statements online through a program other than eCRIS. Since the law requires committee treasurers to submit all electronic filings online, the bill eliminates an obsolete provision allowing mandatory electronic filings to be made using alternative media forms (e.g., disks or tapes).

The bill also makes technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2010

CANDIDATES

Beginning April 1, 2010, campaign treasurers for statewide office candidates, legislative candidates, and candidates for judge of probate who raise or spend \$5,000 or more during a primary or general election campaign must file their campaign finance statements online using eCRIS or a SEEC-prescribed software program. The requirement applies to exploratory and candidate committees. Current law applies only to the candidate committees of statewide office candidates. Statewide office candidates are those running for governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, state comptroller, state treasurer, or secretary of the state.

The bill eliminates the mandated re-filing requirement under which candidate and exploratory committees that reach the threshold (\$250,000 under current law) must resubmit any previously-filed statements that were not filed electronically.

PARTY COMMITTEES AND PACS

Beginning April 1, 2010, each state central committee, legislative caucus, and legislative leadership committee must file all required campaign finance statements online using eCRIS or a SEEC-prescribed software program. So must any town committee or PAC registered with the SEEC that has a balance of \$5,000 or more as of the last day of March according to its April campaign finance statement.

INDIVIDUALS AND COMMITTEES THAT MAKE INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES

By law, any individual or committee that, during a primary or general election campaign, makes or becomes obligated to make an independent expenditure or expenditures exceeding \$1,000 in the aggregate to promote the success or defeat of a statewide office or legislative candidate must file a report with the SEEC.

Beginning April 1, 2010, the bill requires these individuals and committees to file the report online using eCRIS or a SEEC-prescribed software program.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 15 Nay 0 (03/25/2009)