



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 564

January Session, 2011

Substitute Senate Bill No. 945

Senate, April 18, 2011

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 SUBMISSION OF CAMPAIGN REPORTS WITH THE STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION.

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 Section 9-675 of the general statutes is repealed and the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 from passage*):

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

13 of this subsection for vendor software programs.] The commission
14 shall provide training in the use of the [software] web-based program
15 [or programs] created by the commission.

16 (b) [The] On and after April 1, 2012, (1) the campaign treasurer of
17 the candidate committee or exploratory committee for each candidate
18 for nomination or election to the office of Governor, Lieutenant
19 Governor, Attorney General, State Comptroller, State Treasurer, [or]
20 Secretary of the State, state senator, state representative or judge of
21 probate who raises or spends [two hundred fifty] four thousand five
22 hundred dollars or more during an election campaign, (2) the
23 campaign treasurer of a state central committee, legislative caucus
24 committee or legislative leadership committee, (3) the campaign
25 treasurer of any town committee or any other political committee that
26 (A) raises or spends five thousand dollars or more during a calendar
27 year, or (B) raised or spent five thousand dollars or more in the
28 preceding regular election, and (4) any individual, or the campaign
29 treasurer of any other committee, that makes or obligates to make an
30 independent expenditure or expenditures and that is required to file a
31 report of such independent expenditure or expenditures in accordance
32 with the provisions of subdivision (2) of subsection (e) of section 9-612
33 shall file [in electronic form] all financial disclosure statements
34 required by [section 9-608 by either transmitting disks, tapes or other
35 electronic storage media containing the contents of such statements to
36 the State Elections Enforcement Commission or transmitting the
37 statements on-line to said commission. Each such campaign treasurer
38 shall use either (1) a software program created by the commission
39 under subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section, for all such
40 statements, or (2) another software program which provides for the
41 standard reporting format, and complies with the specifications, which
42 are prescribed by the commission under subdivision (2) of subsection
43 (a) of this section, for all such statements. The commission shall accept
44 any statement that uses any such software program] chapters 155 to
45 157, inclusive, by electronic submission pursuant to subsection (a) of
46 this section. Once any such candidate committee has raised or spent
47 [two hundred fifty thousand] four thousand five hundred dollars or

48 more during an election campaign, all previously filed statements
49 required by said section 9-608, which were not filed [in electronic
50 form] by electronic submission shall be refiled in such form [, using
51 such a software program,] not later than the date on which the
52 campaign treasurer of the committee is required to file [the next
53 regular statement under said section 9-608] the committee's next
54 financial disclosure statement.

55 (c) (1) The campaign treasurer of the candidate committee for any
56 other candidate, as defined in section 9-601, who is required to file
57 [the] financial disclosure statements required by [section 9-608]
58 chapters 155 to 157, inclusive, with the commission but who has not
59 reached the threshold amount of money raised or spent, set forth in
60 subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of this section for required electronic
61 submission, and (2) the campaign treasurer of any political committee
62 or [party] town committee that has not reached the threshold amount
63 of money raised or spent, as set forth in subdivision (3) of subsection
64 (b) of this section, may file [in electronic form] any financial disclosure
65 statements required by [said section 9-608] chapters 155 to 157,
66 inclusive, by electronic submission pursuant to subsection (a) of this
67 section. [Such filings may be made by either transmitting disks, tapes
68 or other electronic storage media containing the contents of such
69 statements to the proper authority under section 9-603 or transmitting
70 the statements on-line to such proper authority. Each such campaign
71 treasurer shall use either (A) a software program created by the
72 commission under subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section, for
73 all such statements filed in electronic form, or (B) another software
74 program which provides for the standard reporting format, and
75 complies with the specifications, which are prescribed by the
76 commission under subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of this section, for
77 all such statements filed in electronic form. The proper authority under
78 section 9-603 shall accept any statement that uses any such software
79 program.]

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	9-675

GAE *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 12 \$	FY 13 \$
Elect. Enforcement Com.	GF - Savings	100,000	100,000

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill makes changes regarding electronic filing of financial statements by lowering the requirement for mandated electronic filing from \$250,000 to \$4,500. This requires all candidates and exploratory committees who raise or spend at least \$4,500 to file electronically. Currently all paper filings must be entered into the State Elections Enforcement Commission e-filing system, eCRIS, through contracts with private vendors. Reducing the number that must be entered will result in savings to the state of approximately \$100,000 each fiscal year.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 945****AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF CAMPAIGN REPORTS WITH THE STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION.****SUMMARY:**

Beginning April 1, 2012, this bill lowers, from \$250,000 to \$4,500, the threshold at which statewide office candidate committees must file periodic campaign finance statements electronically with the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC). It (1) extends the requirement to specified exploratory committees, candidate committees, party committees, political committees (known as PACs), and individuals making independent expenditures and (2) expands it to include any financial disclosure statement these committees or individuals must file to comply with campaign finance law or the Citizens' Election Program (CEP).

The bill requires these individuals and committees to file the reports online using eCRIS (i.e., the SEEC's online filing system) or a SEEC-prescribed program.

The bill makes technical and conforming changes, primarily to reflect the new online filing system, eCRIS.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

COVERED COMMITTEES AND INDIVIDUALS

Under current law, statewide office candidate committees that raise or spend \$250,000 or more during an election campaign must file their periodic campaign finance statements electronically with the SEEC. There is no electronic filing requirement for other committees (candidate, party, PAC) or individuals.

The bill lowers this threshold to \$4,500 and extends the electronic filing requirement to (1) exploratory committees for statewide office candidates that raise or spend more than the threshold amount and (2) exploratory and candidate committees for legislative candidates and judge of probate candidates that raise or spend more than the threshold amount.

The bill also extends the electronic filing requirement to:

state central, legislative caucus, and legislative leadership committees;

town committees and PACs that register with the SEEC and raise or spend \$5,000 or more in the current calendar year or raised or spent \$5,000 or more in the last regular election; and

individuals or committees that make or are obligated to make independent expenditures exceeding \$1,000 in the aggregate and must therefore file a report with the SEEC.

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

COVERED FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS

For covered committees and individuals, the bill expands the electronic filing requirement to include any financial disclosure statement they must file to comply with campaign finance law or the CEP. In addition to periodic campaign finance statements, these include the cumulative itemized accounting that accompanies a CEP grant application, supplemental statements, excess expenditure reports, amended filings, and termination reports, among others.

RESUBMITTING REPORTS

Current law requires statewide office candidate committees that reach the threshold to electronically resubmit any previously filed

statements that were not in electronic format. The bill extends this requirement to candidate committees for legislative candidates and candidates for judge of probate.

eCRIS

The bill eliminates references to a SEEC-created “software” program, replacing them with references to a “web-based” program. 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).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 14 Nay 0 (03/30/2011)