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**OLR Bill Analysis****sHB 5552*****AN ACT CONCERNING SLATE COMMITTEES.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill (1) redefines, for purposes of state campaign finance laws and the Citizens' Election Program (CEP), "slate committee" as a "committee," rather than "political committee" (PAC) as under current law, and (2) requires that slate committees be treated as candidate committees for the purposes of state campaign finance laws (other than the CEP).

The bill also (1) allows organization expenditures for the benefit of slate committees and (2) generally codifies existing limits for contributions to slate committees, but makes them applicable separately to primaries and elections. Under current law, they are applicable per year.

The bill also makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

**§§ 1-5 — SLATE COMMITTEES**

Under current law, a slate committee is a PAC formed by at least two candidates that will serve as the sole campaign funding vehicle (1) for nomination or election to any municipal office, (2) in a primary for the office of justice of the peace, or (3) for the position of town committee member.

The bill instead defines a slate committee as a "committee," rather than a PAC. By law, a committee is organized for a single primary, election, or referendum, or for ongoing political activities, to aid or promote the success or defeat of any (1) political party, (2) candidates for public office or town committee member, or (3) referendum question. A PAC is a committee organized by certain entities.

The bill also (1) specifies that “candidate” includes people who will appear on the ballot as a slate committee or part of such a committee and (2) requires that slate committees be treated as candidate committees for the purposes of state campaign finance laws, other than the CEP. Such purposes include, among other things, contribution exemptions, reporting contributions and expenditures, spending surplus funds, and political advertising disclaimer requirements.

The bill is silent about the appointment of a slate committee’s treasurer. Under current law, the chairperson of the slate committee appoints the treasurer. However, by law, the treasurer of a candidate committee must be appointed by the candidate. Because (1) treasurer appointments by a chairperson apply only for PACs and (2) slate committees serve multiple candidates, it is unclear who would appoint the treasurer.

#### **§ 1 — ORGANIZATION EXPENDITURES**

By law, organization expenditures are made by legislative caucus, legislative leadership, or party committees for the benefit of candidates or their committees. They are not considered campaign contributions, but the law places restrictions and limits on those made to benefit legislative candidates participating in the CEP.

The bill allows organization expenditures for the benefit of slate committees. By law, organization expenditures may be used for:

1. the preparation, display, mailing or other distribution of a party candidate listing;
2. certain documents maintained for party or caucus building, including a party platform, an electronic page for collecting online contributions, information about election laws, a list of registered voters, and voter identification information;
3. a campaign event at which a candidate or candidates are present; and
4. retaining an advisor’s services for assisting with campaign

organization, financing, accounting, strategy, law, or media.

## §§ 6, 9-13 — CONTRIBUTION LIMITS

The bill generally codifies existing limits for contributions to slate committees, except that it increases the contribution limits for individuals, as shown in Table 1. Additionally, it makes the limits applicable separately to primaries and elections, which conforms to how the law governs contributions to candidate committees. Under current law, slate committee contribution limits are applicable per year.

Current law does not specifically establish contribution limits for slate committees. In practice, because slate committees are currently PACs by definition, the State Elections Enforcement Commission applies to slate committees the contribution limits applicable to single-election PACs. By law, contribution limits for PACs apply per year.

**Table 1: Slate Committee Contribution Limits**

Section	Contributor	Contribution Limit	
		Current Law (applies per year)	The Bill (applies separately to primaries and elections)
6	Individuals	\$1,000 (\$250 for primaries for justice of the peace)	\$2,000
9	Business PACs	2,000	2,000
10	Labor PACs	2,000	2,000
11	State central	2,500	2,500
11	Town committees	1,500	1,500
12	PACs organized for ongoing purposes	2,000	2,000
13	Single-election PACs	2,000	2,000

## COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 13 Nay 0 (03/24/2014)