OLR Bill Analysis
sHB 7323

AN ACT CONCERNING AN EXEMPTION FOR CERTAIN EXPENDITURES CLEARLY IDENTIFYING GOVERNOR OR PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

SUMMARY

This bill exempts from the definitions of contribution and expenditure, certain communications identifying candidates for governor or U.S. President. Generally, state law subjects contributions to, and expenditures by, candidate committees, party committees, and political committees to campaign finance reporting requirements. Exempted items or services need not be reported as contributions or expenditures.

The bill also makes technical changes, including conforming the expenditure exemption for endorsement communications to the parallel contribution exemption for these communications (CGS 9-601a(b)(22) & (23)). It thus clarifies that the (1) expenditure exemption applies when the endorsed candidate or his or her committee pays for the communication and (2) expenditure is on behalf of the candidate or committee paying for the communication.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

EXEMPTIONS FOR HEAD OF PARTY COMMUNICATIONS

The bill exempts as a contribution to candidates for governor or U.S. President, a communication that (1) refers to a clearly identified candidate for governor or U.S. President and (2) is paid for by a candidate for nomination or election to any other office, or by such a candidate’s committee (hereafter, “head of party communication”). Under the bill, these head of party communications are considered a contribution to any other candidate for statewide, legislative, or municipal office who appears or is referenced in the communication.
The bill creates a parallel expenditure exemption for head of party communications. Under the bill, these communications are considered expenditures to the extent that they refer to any other statewide, legislative, or municipal office candidate.

The bill’s head of party contribution and expenditure exemptions apply to communications that (1) refer to one or more clearly identified candidates and (2) are broadcast by radio, television (other than on a public access channel), or satellite communication or via the Internet, or as a paid-for telephone communication, or that appear in a newspaper, magazine, or on a billboard, or that are sent by mail.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 16 Nay 0 (03/20/2019)