

Government Administration and Elections Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-252

AN ACT CONCERNING REFERENDA, INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES AND

Title: OTHER CAMPAIGN FINANCE CHANGES.

Vote Date: 3/26/2024

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/4/2024

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Government Administration & Elections Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would make several changes to campaign finance statutes including independent expenditures and would make changes to how vendors report how their services are rendered and how expenses are made under their interactions with campaigns.

The substitute language removes certain provisions from the bill.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Michael Brandi, Executive Director, SEEC: Supports this bill because it contains much needed updates to our campaign finance laws that will put the state in a better position leading up to the upcoming constitutional question on the ballot this fall. States that this bill would implement some federal court rulings on independent expenditure committees and would clarify that referendum spending is a type of political expenditure and must be reported accordingly. States that there would be some changes to the organization expenditure statutes, and that the change to dismiss complaints not resolved by SEEC within one year is a good one because it will improve the fairness of the process while ensuring these complaints are handled efficiently. Also states that changing the qualifying contributions amount for CEP funding will help return CEP to its original intent, which is to encourage a larger number of smaller donors giving to a candidate. Also states that this bill protects treasurers by placing liability on campaign consultants for hiding certain money that is spent.

Lee Ross, Deputy Director, Judicial Branch: Has no opinion on the policy changes in the bill, but asks for clarification of language on lines 244-245, specifically asking for clarification of the meaning of "judicial review" in the context of this bill.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Pamela Klem, Campaign Finance Specialist, CT League of Women Voters: Supports this bill because it makes several important changes to campaign finance statutes. States that this bill would align our statutes with federal court rulings and would clarify the legal standing of expenditures in relation to referendum spending.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

No sources of opposition were provided.

Reported by: Gabriel Marques, Assistant Clerk Date: 4/5/2024