

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

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**Subject:** Campaign Finance

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### Overview

This bill defines "electioneering communication" and modifies certain campaign finance reporting requirements. It also establishes a work group to study the feasibility of an internet-based reporting and public subsidy payment system.

#### Section

- 1 Electioneering Communication.** Establishes a definition of "electioneering communication" in Chapter 10A. Electioneering communication includes broadcast communication that refers to a clearly identified candidate, made within 60 days before a general or special election, or within 30 days of a primary or special primary. News broadcasts, commentaries, and editorials are not included, unless the broadcasting station is owned or controlled by a political party unit, committee, or candidate. Campaign expenditures and independent expenditures are also not "electioneering communication."
- 2 Initial Registration.** Shortens the deadline for initial registration of a political committee, political fund, principal campaign committee, or party unit with the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board. Under current law, these organizations must register with the Board within 14 days of receiving a contribution or making a contribution or expenditure of more than \$100. This bill requires registration within 48 hours after a contribution or expenditure of more than \$100.
- 3 Coordinated Communication.** Requires that any expenditure by an individual, committee, fund, or party unit made for an electioneering communication coordinated with a principal campaign committee or party unit be counted both as a contribution to, and an expenditure by the principal campaign committee of the candidate named in the communication.
- 4 Electioneering Communication.** Requires that any individual, committee, fund, or party

unit that makes or contracts to make an expenditure for electioneering communication that, in total, costs more than \$500 within 60 days of a general or special election, or within 30 days of a primary or special primary, file a report with the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board within 24 hours of the expenditure.

The report must include: 1) the amount of each expenditure over \$100 along with the name and address of the person receiving the expenditure, and the purpose of the expenditure; 2) the election to which each electioneering communication pertains, and the name of the candidate identified in the communication; and 3) the name, address, and employer or occupation of the individual, if applicable.

Additional reports must be filed within 24 hours of any new expenditure that meets the above requirements.

- 5 Independent Expenditure.** Requires any individual, committee, fund, or party unit to file a report with the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board within 48 hours of making an independent expenditure that, in the aggregate, exceeds \$500. This requirement applies up to and including the 20<sup>th</sup> day before an election.

During the final 19 days of an election, these same groups must file a report with the Board within 24 hours of making an independent expenditure that, in the aggregate, exceeds \$100.

Additional reports must be filed upon each new qualifying independent expenditure, consistent with the deadlines provided in this section.

- 6 Internet Reporting Study.** Establishes a work group to study the feasibility of creating an online campaign finance reporting and public subsidy payment system. Requires a completed report by January 15, 2008.