
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 1130

Author: Berman (D) and Blanca Rubio (D), et al.

Amended: 8/13/26 in Senate

Vote: 27

SENATE ELECTIONS & C.A. COMMITTEE: 5-0, 6/30/26

AYES: Wiener, Choi, Allen, Cervantes, Umberg

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26

AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 76-0, 5/27/25 (Consent) - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Political Reform Act of 1974: campaign disclosures

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill imposes administrative, civil, and criminal penalties for failure to include disclosure disclaimers when a campaign committee pays a person to post political content online in support of or opposition to candidates and measures.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law, known as the Political Reform Act (PRA):

- 1) Establishes California's campaign finance and disclosure laws for state and local campaigns, candidates, officeholders, and ballot measures, and created the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) to implement, administer, and enforce the PRA.
- 2) Provides for administrative, civil, and criminal penalties for violations of the PRA, including deeming any knowing or willful violation a misdemeanor.
- 3) Requires elected officers, candidates, and campaign committees to file campaign reports at least every six months providing details about contributions

received and expenditures made. These reports must include information about each person to whom an expenditure of \$100 or more has been made during the period covered by the campaign statement, including:

- a) The recipient's full name and street address.
 - b) The amount of each expenditure.
 - c) A brief description of the consideration for which each expenditure was made.
- 4) Requires a person who is paid by a committee to support or oppose a candidate or ballot measure on an internet website, web application, or digital application, as specified, to include a disclaimer stating they were paid by the committee in connection with the post. Failure to make this disclaimer, however, is *not* subject to the standard penalties under the PRA. Instead, existing law authorizes the FPPC to pursue injunctive relief to compel disclosure.

This bill:

- 1) Subjects the person who fails to make the required disclaimer in 4) of existing law to the standard administrative, civil, and criminal penalties under the PRA.
- 2) Requires the campaign committee paying for the post to tell the person posting that failing to include the disclaimer may result in penalties under the PRA.
- 3) Makes the person who posts **and** the campaign committee that paid them jointly and severally liable for any civil or administrative penalties that result from not making the required disclaimer.
- 4) Requires disclosure of the payment made for the post on the campaign committee's regular campaign reports to include a statement that the payment paid a third-party to make an online post.

Comments

- 1) *Author's Statement.* Social media and the growing influencer industry has changed the way candidates reach voters. As more campaigns pay influencers for content, either in favor of themselves or criticizing their opponents, we need to make sure there are appropriate disclosures for voters that those posts are essentially paid political advertisements. This bill will create additional transparency for the public, require campaigns to properly report payments to

influencers, and ensure that voters are not misled by content that looks organic and authentic when it's really the equivalent of an ad.

- 2) *Putting Campaigns on the Hook.* Existing law explicitly provides that the person paid by a campaign committee to post content is not liable for administrative, civil, or criminal penalties under the PRA. Because the duty to post the disclaimer is on the paid person, the campaign committee is also not subject to liability. This bill imposes liability jointly on both the paid person and the committee for any administrative or civil penalties. The person making the post could also be subject to criminal penalties when not including the disclaimer. Criminal penalties are rare under the PRA, as the FPPC handles the vast majority of cases via its administrative enforcement process.
- 3) *Expanded Reporting.* While a campaign must report any payment it makes that is \$100 or more, it must provide only a brief description of what the payment was for and typically uses standardized expenditure codes. Under existing law, a payment for a post might be described as "online outreach" or "online communications." Thus, campaigns can report these payments in ways one cannot tell on the face of the report the payment was for social media content. This bill requires more detail in the report so the public would know the campaign made the payment for posts.

Related/Prior Legislation

SB 678 (Umberg, Chapter 156, Statutes of 2023) requires disclosure disclaimers when a person is paid by a committee to post online political content in support of or opposition to candidates and measures.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: Yes

According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations:

The FPPC indicates that it would incur first-year costs of \$258,000, and \$251,000 annually thereafter, to support one position in its Enforcement Division (General Fund).

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/14/26)

California Fair Political Practices Commission

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/14/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 76-0, 5/27/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Bennett, Jeff Gonzalez, Nguyen

Prepared by: Carrie Cornwell / E. & C.A. / (916) 651-4106
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**** END ****