

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 1511 (Committee on Elections)

As Amended August 27, 2025

2/3 vote

SUMMARY

Clarifies that a candidate who has raised money for a candidacy for one office, but who does not run in the primary election for that office, may transfer the campaign contributions raised for the primary and general election to a committee established by the candidate to run for a different office. Standardizes the terminology used in the Political Reform Act (PRA) to refer to official election publications. Makes technical changes.

Senate Amendments

Delete two code sections from the bill that proposed technical changes to the PRA. Those code sections are also found in AB 808 (Addis) of the current legislative session, which incorporates the technical changes that were previously proposed by this bill.

COMMENTS

Last year, the Legislature unanimously approved SB 948 (Limón & Zbur), Chapter 125, Statutes of 2024. SB 948 sought to codify prior advice that the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) issued in 2010 (*Brown* Advice Letter, No. A-09-276). Under that advice, a candidate who raises money for the primary and general elections for one office, but who decides before the primary election not to run for that office, may transfer those campaign contributions to a committee established by the candidate to run for a different office, subject to specified restrictions. In an effort to codify that advice, the language of SB 948 made it clear that such transfers were allowed if the candidate did not "file a declaration of candidacy to qualify" for the primary election.

After SB 948 was passed and signed into law, the Legislature approved AB 1784 (Pellerin), Chapter 355, Statutes of 2024. Among other provisions, AB 1784 allowed candidates for elective state office (other than statewide office), for the first time, to withdraw nomination documents (including declarations of candidacy) after filing them for the primary election. Due to the enactment of AB 1784, it is now possible that a candidate for elective state office could file a declaration of candidacy but subsequently withdraw that declaration of candidacy and, as a result, not be a legally qualified candidate for that office at the primary election.

This bill clarifies that a candidate who has raised money for a candidacy for one office, but who does not run in the primary election for that office, may transfer the campaign contributions raised for the primary and general election to a committee established by the candidate to run for a different office. Such transfers would be subject to any relevant campaign contribution limits, and contributions that were transferred would have to be attributed to specific donors in accordance with existing law. This proposal additionally specifies that the intent of the Legislature in enacting this provision is to ensure that SB 948 is interpreted consistent with the FPPC's advice in its *Brown* advice letter.

This bill additionally makes various technical changes to the PRA.

The Senate amendments deleted two code sections from this bill that caused this bill to be in conflict with AB 808 (Addis) of the current legislative session. The technical changes that this bill proposed to the PRA in those two code sections have been incorporated into AB 808. As amended in the Senate, this bill is consistent with prior Assembly actions.

California voters passed an initiative, Proposition 9, in 1974 that created the FPPC and codified significant restrictions and prohibitions on candidates, officeholders, and lobbyists. That initiative is commonly known as the PRA. Amendments to the PRA that are not submitted to the voters, such as those contained in this bill, must further the purposes of the initiative and require a two-thirds vote of both houses of the Legislature.

According to the Author

"This is one of the Assembly Elections Committee's annual omnibus bills, containing various minor, technical, and conforming changes to provisions of the PRA. All provisions contained in this bill address issues identified by Assembly Elections Committee staff."

Arguments in Support

None received.

Arguments in Opposition

None received.

FISCAL COMMENTS

None. This bill is keyed non-fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

VOTES:

ASM ELECTIONS: 7-0-0

YES: Pellerin, Macedo, Bennett, Berman, Solache, Stefani, Lackey

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 77-0-2

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, 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, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas
ABS, ABST OR NV: Nguyen, Stefani

UPDATED

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