SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 2421	**Hearing Date:**	6/9/26
Author:	Valencia		
Version:	4/16/26		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	Yes
Consultant:	Carrie Cornwell		

Subject: Political Reform Act of 1974: committee termination.

DIGEST

This bill terminates a campaign committee when the committee has a cash balance of $3,000 or less and has not filed a campaign report for at least the preceding 12 months.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

1) Creates the Political Reform Act (PRA), which sets campaign finance and disclosure laws for state and local campaigns, candidates, officeholders, and ballot measures, and establishes the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) to implement, administer, and enforce the PRA.

2) Requires, pursuant to the PRA, candidates for elective office, committees formed to support or oppose candidates for public office or ballot measures, slate mailer organizations, and other specified entities, to file periodic and activity-based campaign reports disclosing contributions, expenditures, and other related matters.

3) Defines a committee as a person or combination of persons who receives contributions of more than $2,000 in a calendar year, makes independent expenditures totaling $1,000 or more in a calendar year, or makes contributions totaling $10,000 or more in a calendar year to or at the behest of candidates or committees.

4) Allows a committee to terminate provided that the committee or candidate will have no activity which must be disclosed pursuant to the PRA's requirements for filing campaign reports.

This bill:

1) Terminates a committee 180 days after the Secretary of State (SOS) sends written notice to the committee's treasurer and to the FPPC that the SOS has determined that the committee has either:

   a) Failed to submit a campaign report for at least the preceding 12 months and had an ending cash balance of $3,000 or less on its last campaign statement or an

ending cash balance of $5,000 or less while $2,000 or more is owed to the controlling candidate.

b) Filed a statement of organization in error.

2) Permits the committee, its representative, or the FPPC to file a written objection to the termination within the180 days, which stops the termination. If the SOS receives no objection, then the committee terminates and within 30 days of that termination, the SOS shall send a notice to the filing officer with whom the committee was required to file its last campaign statement.

COMMENTS

1) Author's Statement. This bill would improve the accuracy and integrity of our campaign finance disclosure system. By creating a process for the SOS to terminate inactive campaign committees, while still allowing committees the opportunity to object, this bill would ensure our database is up to date and reduces administrative burdens for regulators. This would allow the FPPC to focus its resources on compliance issues and investigations, creating stronger enforcement and oversight.

2) Cal-Access and CARS. In 2000, the SOS deployed, pursuant to SB 49 (Karnette), Chapter 866, Statutes of 1997, the California Automated Lobby Activity and Campaign Contribution and Expenditure Search System, or Cal-Access. Cal-Access replaced the paper-based system and provides on-line filing of reports and statements required by the PRA. It also provides online access to these statements and reports for the public.

   SB 1349 (Hertzberg), Chapter 845, Statutes of 2016, directed the SOS, in consultation with the FPPC, to replace Cal-Access with a new disclosure system, the Cal-Access Replacement System or CARS. The SOS expects to fully deploy CARS by the end of 2026 at which time all filing of campaign reports will be made online.

   In the lead up to that deployment, the SOS and FPPC have sponsored a number of bills, including this one, to ensure that statute facilitates the effective operation of CARS.

3) Arguments in Support. The FPPC, the bill's sponsor, writes in support:

   > …many committees that should have terminated retain active status in the state's campaign finance database, CAL-ACCESS. With the new CAL-ACCESS Replacement System (CARS) in development, it is important that the Secretary of State have a mechanism to clear out defunct committees, so that CARS will include the most accurate and up-to-date information about committees possible.
   >
   > To effectuate this purpose, [this bill] would authorize the Secretary of State to automatically terminate committees under specified circumstances, after a notice period and if no objection is made by the committee or the FPPC.

RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION

AB 808 (Addis), Chapter 278, Statutes of 2025, among other things, updates terms used in state law to reflect the electronic filing of required campaign-related reports that will occur when the SOS certifies the new online reporting system.

PRIOR ACTION

Assembly Floor:	77 - 0
Assembly Appropriations Committee:	14 - 0
Assembly Elections Committee:	8 - 0

POSITIONS

Sponsor: California Fair Political Practices Commission

Support: None received

Oppose: None received

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