CONSENT

Bill No: SB 1432
Author: Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments
Amended: 4/14/26
Vote: 27

SENATE ELECTIONS & C.A. COMMITTEE: 5-0, 4/21/26
AYES: Wiener, Choi, Allen, Cervantes, Umberg

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

SUBJECT: Political Reform Act of 1974

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill authorizes the Fair Political Practices Commission (FFPC) to have greater flexibility in classifying nonclerical positions, expands the state offices for which a candidate must file their statement of intention online or electronically with the Secretary of State (SOS) to include judicial offices, increases the minimum text size of a required statement to 10-point Roman boldface type, and makes technical changes.

ANALYSIS:

Existing Law:

1) Prohibits the FPPC from including a nonclerical position in the same class in the civil service classification plan with any position of any other department or agency.

2) Requires, before becoming a candidate for a specific office, an individual shall file a statement of intention to be a candidate, signed under penalty of perjury. An individual who intends to be a candidate for elective state office shall file the statement of intention online or electronically with the SOS.

3) Requires, specified individuals who have to report activity expenses, when sending any written or printed invitation to an elected state officer, candidate

for elective state office, legislative official, or agency official, to include on the invitation or on a letter attached to the invitation a printed or handwritten statement that is at least as large and readable as 8-point Roman boldface type, in a color or print that contrasts with the background so as to be easily legible. The statement shall read:

> "Attendance at this event by a public official will constitute acceptance of a reportable gift."

This bill:

1) Allows the FPPC to include a nonclerical position in a class in the civil service classification plan that is separate and distinct from any other position of any other department or agency.

2) Expands the state offices for which candidates must file their statement of intention online or electronically with the SOS to include judicial offices.

3) Increases the font size on required statements, described in 3) of existing law, to 10-point Roman boldface type.

4) Makes technical changes.

Background

Political Reform Act. Proposition 9, which appeared on the June 1974 ballot, created the Political Reform Act (PRA) and established California's campaign finance and disclosure laws for state and local campaigns, candidates, officeholders, and ballot measures. Prop 9 created the FPPC to implement, administer, and enforce the PRA.

Under the PRA individuals who intend to be candidates for elective state office must file a statement of intention, Form 501, online or electronically with the SOS. Under the PRA, an "elective state office" includes office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Insurance Commissioner, Controller, SOS, Treasurer, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Member of the Legislature, member elected to the Board of Administration of the Public Employees' Retirement System, member elected to the Teachers' Retirement Board, and member of the State Board of Equalization.

Separately, all candidates, and elected officers and their controlled committees, as specified, must file campaign statements with the SOS.

Cal-Access Replacement System or (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 on-line access to these statements and reports for the public.

Cal-Access is now 26 years old, and the SOS reports that components of the system are no longer supported by its vendor. As a result, the system has periodically crashed and denied public access. Additionally, the SOS has indicated that the ability to make modifications to Cal-Access is very limited.

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 does not expect to fully deploy CARS until late 2026 at the earliest.

Comments

Committee Bill. This bill is one of the Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments' committee bills. This bill contains changes requested by the FPPC and by committee staff.

Personnel Classification Plan. The California Personnel Classification Plan, which is administered by CALHR and the State Personnel Board, is a framework that groups state civil service positions into classes. The allocation of the position into a class is based on the duties and responsibilities of the position. Positions are included in the same class if the positions are sufficiently similar so the duties and responsibilities can use the same descriptive title, the positions have the same requirements for education, experience, knowledge, and the current position holder has the ability to perform the duties, the positions require the same tests of fitness, and the same schedule of compensation can be made to apply with equity.

According to the FPPC, current law prevents them from using any statewide classifications for nonclerical positions. The proposed language would give the FPPC the option to use statewide classifications that align with the duties and responsibilities of FPPC specific positions, to support a more efficient hiring process and cost-effective exam administration.

Most of the FPPC's positions can be standardized with other positions in the state classification system, but some specialized positions, such as Political Reform Consultant II, require flexibility allowing the FPPC to mandate knowledge and expertise of the PRA for that position.

Same Code Section? The PRA includes various sections that exist in multiple versions with the same code section number. The existence of multiple versions of the code with the same code section number reflects a technical mechanism to allow certain changes to state law to go into effect when CARS is deployed.

In anticipation of the deployment of CARS, SB 1239 (Hertzberg, Chapter 662, Statutes of 2018) made numerous substantive and technical changes to provisions of the PRA governing the filing of campaign and lobbying reports. As CARS was in development at the time, SB 1239 made changes that were incorporated into the design of CARS but specified those changes would not go into effect until the SOS certified that CARS was functional and met the requirements of state law. Additionally, SB 459 (Allen, Chapter 873, Statutes of 2022) created new provision going into effect a year after the SOS certifies CARS. As a result, various provisions of the PRA exist: one version is operative now, a second version becoming operative when the SOS certifies that CARS meets specified requirements of state law (at which point, the currently operative version of the section will become inoperative), and a third version becoming operative one year after CARS is certified.

AB 808 (Addis, Chapter 278, Statutes of 2025) made changes to the provisions that would be operative once the SOS certifies CARS, not the provisions that would be operative a year after the SOS certifies CARS. This bill amends the provision a year after CARS is certified to have it not override changes made by AB 808.

Current Form 501. Under the PRA, judicial candidates are not included in the definition of an "elective state officer." Therefore, no statute requires judicial candidates to file their Form 501 with the SOS. Judicial candidates, however, are required to file campaign reports with the SOS. Currently, judicial candidates already file with the SOS, as the Form 501 mandates every candidate to do so. This bill would make it explicit in statute that judicial candidates must file their Form 501 with the SOS.

Related/Prior Legislation

AB 808 (Addis, Chapter 278, Statutes of 2025) eliminated the option to file various campaign reports via facsimile and updated terms used in state law to reflect the electronic filing of required campaign-related reports.

SB 459 (Allen, Chapter 873, Statutes of 2022) required lobbying entities to disclose additional information on lobbying reports, as specified, and increases the frequency of reporting if certain conditions are met. The provisions of this bill become operative one year after the date the SOS certifies CARS.

SB 1239 (Hertzberg, Chapter 662, Statutes of 2018) made numerous substantive and technical changes related to the procedures associated with filing campaign and lobbying reports through CARS.

SB 1349 (Hertzberg, Chapter 845, Statutes of 2016) requires the SOS, in consultation with the FPPC, to develop CARS.

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

SUPPORT: (Verified 5/4/26)

None received

OPPOSITION: (Verified 5/4/26)

None received

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5/5/26 15:55:53

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