

**SUBJECT:** Electronic notification of political reporting deadlines

**COMMITTEE:** Elections — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 7 ayes — T. Smith, Allen, Anchia, Bohac, Bonnen, B. Brown, Heflin  
0 nays  
2 absent — Peña, Harper-Brown

**SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, April 30 — 31-0, on Local and Uncontested Calendar

**WITNESSES:** (*On House companion bill, HB 3922:*)  
For — None  
Against — None  
On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* David Reisman, Texas Ethics Commission)

**BACKGROUND:** Election Code, sec. 251 regulates political funds and campaigns and outlines related duties of the Texas Ethics Commission. The TEC is required to notify each person responsible for filing a report with the commission of the filing deadline, except that notice of the deadline is not required for a political committee involved in an election other than a primary or the general election for state and county officers.

If the commission is unable to notify a person of a deadline after two attempts, no further attempts are required until the person has notified the commission of the person's current address.

Sec. 254, subch. C through F require political reporting to the TEC by candidates, officeholders, specific-purpose committees, and general-purpose committees.

According to the TEC, several thousand dollars a year could be saved if electronic mail could be used to provide notice of filing deadlines.

SB 1808  
House Research Organization  
page 2

**DIGEST:** SB 1808 would authorize the Texas Ethics Commission (TEC) to provide notification of filing report deadlines by e-mail. An update of an e-mail address to the TEC would count as notification of a current address.

Government Code, sec. 552, the Public Information Law, would not apply to a filing deadline notification sent by e-mail.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2009.

**NOTES:** The House companion bill, HB 3922 by Peña, passed the House on the Local, Consent, and Resolutions Calendar on April 20 and was reported favorably, without amendment, by the Senate State Affairs Committee on May 22 and recommended for the Local and Uncontested Calendar.