

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1780
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State Affairs
4-28-97
As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, some candidates and political action committees (PACs) are required to file periodic reports of contributions and expenditures with the Texas Ethics Commission (commission); however, these reports are only available for inspection and duplication at the commission's office in Austin. Although the commission is currently scanning documents so they can be accessed via an electronic bulletin board or a web site, a strain on the commission's budget is of concern. S.B. 1780 would require most candidates and PACs to file a copy of their contribution and expenditure reports electronically, either by diskette or on-line, and make this data available for public inspection.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 1780 outlines provisions regarding procedures for and access to reports of political contributions and expenditures.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 251B, Election Code, by adding Section 251.031, as follows:

Sec. 251.031. INDEX OF REPORTS; PUBLICATIONS. Requires the Texas Ethics Commission (commission) to maintain and publish indexes of reports filed with the commission, and to produce and distribute a general index or records available for public use. Sets forth further requirements regarding certain reports.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 254.036, Election Code, to set forth requirements and outline provisions regarding the filing of reports and affidavits. Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 3. Amends Chapter 254B, Election Code, by adding Section 254.0401, as follows:

Sec. 254.0401. PUBLIC INSPECTION OF REPORTS. Sets forth requirements and outlines provisions regarding public inspection of reports.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 1997.

SECTION 5. Makes application of this prospective to January 1, 1998.

SECTION 6. Emergency clause.