

Campaign Finance and Elections

Campaign finance. Senate Bill 01-92 would have modified the Fair Campaign Practices Act (FCPA). The bill would have made public, campaign contributions by "education committees" by requiring any person or political committee making an independent expenditure in excess of \$1,000 to disclose contributor information to the Secretary of State. The bill would have broadened the definition of a "political message" produced by an independent expenditure under the FCPA, thus requiring financial reporting if the political message goes beyond providing information about an issue and could be reasonably interpreted as targeting a candidate or issue. Senate Bill 01-92 also would have altered civil penalties for intentional violations of FCPA contribution limits. The bill was postponed indefinitely.

House Bill 01-1093 would have modified the "Fair Campaign Practices Act" (FCPA) to establish limits on the amount of money that a political party may contribute in an election cycle to a state candidate's candidate committee. The bill also sought to modify the definition of "political party" in the FCPA to include affiliated party organizations at the state, county, and local district levels and to require that all such affiliates be considered a single entity for purposes of the FCPA. The bill was postponed indefinitely.

Elections. Senate Bill 01-74 would have allowed any election to be conducted by mail ballot at the discretion of political subdivisions conducting an election that is not part of a coordinated election. For coordinated elections, the election would be held by mail ballot at the discretion of the board of county commissioners. The bill also specified procedures by which an unaffiliated voter may declare a party affiliation and receive a ballot for a mail ballot primary election. The bill was postponed indefinitely.

House Bill 01-1274 revises election laws of the state. The bill clarifies that precinct caucuses and minor political party meetings to elect party officers may be held in a private home that is open to the public and not just in a public place, addresses procedures for conducting mail ballot elections, clarifies procedures for handling petitions by petition circulators for candidates seeking ballot access by petition and elections to recall elected officials, and alters the numbering of election precincts.

Senate Bill 01-132 expands the time period for completing a mandatory recount of election ballots from 21 to 30 days for congressional, state and district offices, state ballot questions and issues, offices and ballot measures in county elections, and nonpartisan elections not coordinated by county clerks.

Ballots are to be recounted using the identical, procedures, methods and processes used for the original count of the ballots cast.

House Bill 01-1307 requires the Secretary of State to implement a computerized voter registration and election management system to replace the consolidated data management system maintained by the Department of Revenue. County clerks who are using the existing consolidated data management system will be permitted to use the new election management system without charge. Other county clerks will be charged a fee for the use of the system.

Senate Bill 01-51 would have specified new requirements for presidential electors. Under the bill, one presidential elector would have been elected from each congressional district and two presidential electors would have been elected at large. Each at-large elector would be required to vote for the presidential candidate who received the highest number of votes in the general election. Each of the other electors would be required to vote for the presidential candidate who received the highest number of votes in each respective congressional district in general election. Currently, all eight of the state's electoral votes go to the presidential candidate who wins the statewide popular vote. The bill would have referred the passage of the act to the voters for consideration at the 2002 general election. The new system would have commenced with the 2004 general election. The bill was postponed indefinitely.

House Bill 01-1198 would have modified requirements for state and municipal initiative and referendum petitions as well as petitions related to political offices circulated on or after November 15, 2001. The bill would have allowed only state residents to circulate petitions for state-wide initiatives, and remove from statute the requirements that a petition circulator be a registered elector and that a circulator wear a name badge while circulating a petition. The bill was postponed indefinitely.

House Concurrent Resolution 01-1001 would have referred to Colorado voters a measure to require initiative petitions for amendments to the state constitution to be signed by registered electors residing in each congressional district in an amount equal to at least five percent of the total number of votes cast for Secretary of State in each district at the previous general election. The resolution sought to increase the period prior to an election that initiative petitions must be filed with the Secretary of State to at least four months, instead of the current three months before the election, and would have decreased the time period for which a citizen must reside in the state to be a qualified elector from at least one year to at least thirty days. The bill was postponed indefinitely.

Senate Bill 01-85 would have required the Legislative Council and the Office of Legislative Legal Services to provide a form for proponents to use in submitting initiated measures for review and comment. The form would identify: the proponents of the measure, a reference number and name for the draft, and the date and time that the draft was submitted. The bill also would have allowed a person who signs an initiative petition to request that his or her signature be removed from the petition. The bill was postponed indefinitely.

Comments to: lcs.ga@state.co.us