

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 336
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Public Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, campaign finance reports for school board elections are available through an open records request. In larger cities, school board elections that were formerly small and intimate processes have become progressively more complex and expensive. C.S.H.B. 336 attempts to raise the reporting standards of school board races to the same standards as those of similar races by making changes relating to the filing and posting on the Internet of reports and political contributions and expenditures required in connection with the office of member of the board of trustees of certain school districts.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 336 amends the Election Code to require a report of political contributions or expenditures required to be filed on or after January 1, 2012, by a member of the board of trustees, a candidate for membership on the board of trustees, or a specific-purpose committee for supporting, opposing, or assisting a candidate or member of a board of trustees of a school district that is located wholly or partly in a municipality with a population of more than 500,000 to be posted on the school district's Internet website. The bill requires such reports to be available to the public on the website not later than the fifth business day after the date the report is filed with the district. The bill specifies that the access allowed to reports is in addition to the public's access to the information through other electronic or print distribution of the information. The bill authorizes the district, before making such a report available on the Internet, to remove each portion, other than city, state, and zip code, of the address of a person listed as having made a political contribution to the person filing the report. The bill requires the address information, if removed, to remain available on the report maintained in the district's office.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2011.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 336 differs from the original by authorizing a school district to remove certain address information of a person listed as having made a political contribution to the person filing a report of political contributions and expenditures in connection with the office of a member of the board of trustees of certain school districts before making the report available on the Internet, whereas the original requires such removal. The substitute contains a conforming change not in the original to reflect this authorization. The substitute omits a provision contained in the original prohibiting such a report from being available electronically in the school district's office.