

By: Anchía

H.B. No. 4787

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1  
2 relating to the acceptance of political contributions by a member  
3 of the Railroad Commission of Texas and of political contributions  
4 made in connection with the office of railroad commissioner.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

6 SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 81, Natural Resources  
7 Code, is amended by adding Section 81.010045 to read as follows:

8 Sec. 81.010045. CERTAIN POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS  
9 RESTRICTED. (a) In this section, "political committee" and  
10 "political contribution" have the meanings assigned by Section  
11 251.001, Election Code.

12 (b) A commissioner may not knowingly accept a political  
13 contribution given or offered with the intention that it be used in  
14 connection with a campaign for or the holding of any elective  
15 office, including the office of commissioner, except during the  
16 period:

17 (1) beginning 17 months before the date of the next  
18 general election at which the commissioner's office is filled; and

19 (2) ending on the 30th day after the date of that  
20 election.

21 (c) A person other than a commissioner may not knowingly  
22 accept a political contribution given or offered with the intention  
23 that it be used in connection with a campaign for the office of  
24 commissioner, except:

1           (1) during the period:

2                   (A) beginning 17 months before the date of the  
3 next general election at which any commissioner's office is filled;

4 and

5                   (B) ending on the 30th day after the date of that  
6 election; or

7           (2) during the period beginning on the date a vacancy  
8 in the office of commissioner occurs and ending on the date that  
9 vacancy is filled.

10           (d) A commissioner may not knowingly accept a political  
11 contribution, and shall refuse a political contribution that is  
12 received, from a party in a contested case before the commission or  
13 a political committee affiliated with such a party during the  
14 period:

15                   (1) beginning on the date notice of the hearing in the  
16 contested case is given; and

17                   (2) ending on:

18                           (A) the 30th day after the date the decision in  
19 the contested case is rendered; or

20                           (B) if a request for rehearing is filed:

21                                   (i) the date the request is denied; or

22                                   (ii) the 30th day after the date the  
23 decision after rehearing is rendered.

24           (e) A commissioner shall return a political contribution  
25 that is received and refused under Subsection (d) not later than the  
26 30th day after the date the commissioner received the contribution.

27           (f) The commission shall adopt rules necessary to implement

1 Subsections (d) and (e), including rules that:

2 (1) direct the commission to maintain a list of the  
3 contested cases before the commission and the parties to each case  
4 in order to aid the commissioners in complying with those  
5 subsections; and

6 (2) ensure that each notice of a hearing in a contested  
7 case that is issued by the commission or a commissioner contains  
8 information about the political contributions prohibited under  
9 Subsection (d).

10 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.