
The Doolittle Bill: Citizen Legislature and Political Freedom Act

105th Congress

The legislation introduced by Congressman John T. Doolittle (R-Calif.) provides for deregulating campaign finance, eliminating both contribution and expenditure limitations. It also provides for ending federal financing of presidential campaigns. Its emphasis is on improved disclosure of campaign finance information primarily through electronic filing.

To amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to reform the financing of campaigns for election for Federal office.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

March 6, 1997

MR. DOOLITTLE (for himself, MR. DELAY, MR. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, MR. YOUNG of Alaska, MR. BALLENGER, MRS. CHENOWETH, MR. MCKEON, MR. RADANOVICH, MR. LEWIS of California, MR. LEWIS of Kentucky, MR. MCINNIS, MR. HUNTER, and MR. ROHRBACHER) introduced the following bill, which was referred to the Committee on House Oversight, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

A BILL

To amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to reform the financing of campaigns for election for Federal office.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ‘Citizen Legislature and Political Freedom Act.’

SEC. 2. REMOVAL OF LIMITATIONS ON FEDERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS.

Section 315(a) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 441a(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

‘(9) The limitations established under this subsection shall not apply to contributions made during calendar years beginning after 1998.’

SEC. 3. TERMINATION OF TAXPAYER FINANCING OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGNS.

(a) TERMINATION OF DESIGNATION OF INCOME TAX PAYMENTS—Section 6096 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

‘(d) TERMINATION—This section shall not apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 1997.’

(b) TERMINATION OF FUND AND ACCOUNT—

(1) TERMINATION OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN FUND—

(A) IN GENERAL—Chapter 95 of subtitle H of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

‘SEC. 9014. TERMINATION.

The provisions of this chapter shall not apply with respect to any presidential election (or any presidential nominating convention) after December 31, 1998, or to any candidate in such an election.’

(B) TRANSFER OF EXCESS FUNDS TO GENERAL FUND—Section 9006 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

‘(d) TRANSFER OF FUNDS REMAINING AFTER 1998—The Secretary shall transfer all amounts in the fund after December 31, 1998, to the general fund of the Treasury.’

(2) TERMINATION OF ACCOUNT—Chapter 96 of subtitle H of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

‘SEC. 9043. TERMINATION.

The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to any candidate with respect to any presidential election after December 31, 1998.’

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS—

(1) The table of sections for chapter 95 of subtitle H of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

‘Sec. 9014. Termination.’

(2) The table of sections for chapter 96 of subtitle H of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

‘Sec. 9043. Termination.’

SEC. 4. DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN SOFT MONEY EXPENDITURES OF POLITICAL PARTIES.

(a) TRANSFERS OF FUNDS BY NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES—Section 304(b)(4) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 434(b)(4)) is amended—

- (1) by striking ‘and’ at the end of subparagraph (H);
- (2) by adding ‘and’ at the end of subparagraph (I); and
- (3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

‘(J) in the case of a political committee of a national political party, all funds transferred to any political committee of a State or local political

party, without regard to whether or not the funds are otherwise treated as contributions or expenditures under this title;’.

(b) DISCLOSURE BY STATE AND LOCAL POLITICAL PARTIES OF INFORMATION REPORTED UNDER STATE LAW—Section 304 of such Act (2 U.S.C. 434) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

‘(d) If a political committee of a State or local political party is required under a State or local law, rule, or regulation to submit a report on its disbursements to an entity of the State or local government, the committee shall file a copy of the report with the Commission at the time it submits the report to such an entity.’.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to elections occurring after January 1999.

SEC. 5. PROMOTING EXPEDITED AVAILABILITY OF FEC REPORTS.

(a) MANDATORY ELECTRONIC FILING—Section 304(a)(11)(A) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 434(a)(11)(A)) is amended by striking ‘permit reports required by’ and inserting ‘require reports under’.

(b) REQUIRING REPORTS FOR ALL CONTRIBUTIONS MADE TO ANY POLITICAL COMMITTEE WITHIN 90 DAYS OF ELECTION; REQUIRING REPORTS TO BE MADE WITHIN 24 HOURS—Section 304(a)(6) of such Act (2 U.S.C. 434(a)(6)) is amended to read as follows:

‘(6)(A) Each political committee shall notify the Secretary or the Commission, and the Secretary of State, as appropriate, in writing, of any contribution received by the committee during the period which begins on the 90th day before an election and ends at the time the polls close for such election. This notification shall be made within 24 hours (or, if earlier, by midnight of the day on which the contribution is deposited) after the receipt of such contribution and shall include the name of the candidate involved (as appropriate) and the office sought by the can-

didate, the identification of the contributor, and the date of receipt and amount of the contribution.

‘(B) The notification required under this paragraph shall be in addition to all other reporting requirements under this Act.’.

(c) INCREASING ELECTRONIC DISCLOSURE—Section 304 of such Act (2 U.S.C. 434(a)), as amended by section 4(b), is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

‘(e)(1) The Commission shall make the information contained in the reports submitted under this section available on the Internet and publicly available at the offices of the Commission as soon as practicable (but in no case later than 24 hours) after the information is received by the Commission.

‘(2) In this subsection, the term ‘Internet’ means the international computer network of both Federal and non-Federal interoperable packet-switched data networks.’.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE—The amendment made by this section shall apply with respect to reports for periods beginning on or after January 1, 1999.

SEC. 6. WAIVER OF ‘BEST EFFORTS’ EXCEPTION FOR INFORMATION ON IDENTIFICATION OF CONTRIBUTORS.

(a) IN GENERAL—Section 302(i) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 432(i)) is amended—

(1) by striking ‘(i) When the treasurer’ and inserting ‘(i)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), when the treasurer’; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

‘(2) Paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to information regarding the identification of any person who makes a contribution or contri-

butions aggregating more than \$200 during a calendar year (as required to be provided under subsection (c)(3)).’.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to persons making contributions for elections occurring after January 1999.