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*Bill Analysis*  
Legislative Service Commission

## **H.B. 525**

123rd General Assembly  
(As Introduced)

**Reps. Redfern, R. Miller, Allen, Logan, Jones, Flannery, Patton, Pringle,  
Britton, DePiero, Verich, Bender, Gooding**

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### **BILL SUMMARY**

- Limits aggregate political contributions to campaign committees and other entities during specified periods by individuals aged 11 through 17 to \$250.
- Prohibits political contributions by individuals under the age of 11.

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### **CONTENT AND OPERATION**

Existing law generally requires that campaign committees and other partisan political entities file a statement of contributions received and expenditures made during specified reporting periods with the Secretary of State.<sup>1</sup> The bill adds the age of each individual who is a contributor to the items that must be included in the statement. (R.C. 3517.10(A) and (B)(4)(g).)

Existing law limits the amounts that an individual may contribute in any primary election period, general election period, or calendar year (whichever applies) to campaign committees and other partisan political entities and prohibits those entities from accepting amounts exceeding the limits. The bill (1) applies the existing limits, which range from \$2,500 to \$15,000, to individuals aged 18 and older, (2) sets a limit of \$250 in aggregate contributions to a campaign committee or other entity from individuals aged 11 through 17, and (3) prohibits all contributions by, and acceptance of all contributions from, individuals under the age of 11. (R.C. 3517.102(B)(1), (C)(1), (2), (3), (4), (5), and (7).)

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<sup>1</sup> *The other entities include political action committees, legislative campaign funds, political parties, and political contributing entities. Certain campaign committees also must file certain monthly statements of contributions received and certain two-business-day statements of contributions received.*

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## COMMENT

The constitutionality of limitations on campaign contributions is uncertain. In *Nixon v. Shrink Missouri Government PAC* (8th Cir. 1998), 161 F.3d 519, the United States Court of Appeals struck down a Missouri law limiting campaign contributions. That case has been argued before the U.S. Supreme Court, and a decision is pending. The Supreme Court has previously held that the First Amendment protects all aspects of the political process, including political contributions, but that some restrictions are permissible to ensure the integrity of elections. The decision in *Nixon* may shed more light on the validity of the limitations contained in the bill.

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## HISTORY

| ACTION     | DATE     | JOURNAL ENTRY |
|------------|----------|---------------|
| Introduced | 12-23-99 | p. 1469       |

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