



Lynda J. Jacobsen

*Bill Analysis*  
Legislative Service Commission

## **H.B. 527**

125th General Assembly  
(As Introduced)

**Rep. Wolpert**

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### **BILL SUMMARY**

#### **Contribution limits**

- Eliminates all campaign finance contribution limits and associated penalties applicable to statewide candidates, candidates for the office of member of the General Assembly, and various political entities (sec. 3517.102--outright repealed and sec. 3517.992--amended).
- Eliminates provisions requiring the Secretary of State to biennially adjust the amount of the contribution limits based upon the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (sec. 3517.104).
- Eliminates limits on the amount of personal funds a candidate for the office of member of the General Assembly or a statewide candidate may use in that candidate's campaign without filing a personal funds notice, but retains the general requirement that personal funds first be deposited into the campaign fund of a candidate before being expended on the candidate's behalf (sec. 3517.103).
- Eliminates provisions permitting the opponents of personal funds candidates to accept contributions in excess of the contribution limits after filing a declaration of no limits (secs. 3517.103 and 3517.992).
- Eliminates provisions permitting a campaign committee to accept after an election to pay unpaid debt remaining from that election additional contributions that are counted toward the contribution limits applicable to that election, and associated penalties (sec. 3517.108--outright repealed and secs. 3517.10(D)(3), 3517.11(C)(2), 3517.154(A)(3), and 3517.992--amended).

- Eliminates the two-business-day campaign finance statements that statewide candidates are required to file within 19 days before an election if they accept contributions in excess of specified contribution limits from a contributor during that time period (secs. 3517.10(A) and (C)(7), 3517.11(B)(3)(a), and 3517.13(A)(2)).
- Eliminates a provision that determines the manner in which contributions made by a partnership or other unincorporated business are attributed for the purpose of contribution limits (sec. 3517.10(I)(2)).

*Campaign finance web sites*

- Requires the Secretary of State to establish a publicly viewable campaign finance web site for each campaign committee of a candidate for statewide office, for each campaign committee of a candidate for the office of member of the General Assembly, each state and county political party, and each legislative campaign fund (new sec. 3517.102(B)).
- Requires each campaign committee, political party, or legislative campaign fund for which a campaign finance web site is established to promptly report on that web site information regarding each contribution of more than \$1,000 that it received within the four preceding calendar years (new sec. 3517.102(C) and (D)(1)).
- Requires each campaign committee, political party, or legislative campaign fund for which a campaign finance web site is established to report on that web site information regarding each contribution of more than \$1,000 that it receives before depositing the contribution into any account (new sec. 3517.102(C), (D)(2), and (E)).
- Establishes a fine of \$100 for each day of violation for anyone who violates the reporting requirements applicable to campaign finance web sites (sec. 3517.992(U)).
- Requires the Secretary of State to adopt rules under the Administrative Procedure Act to determine (1) the manner in which campaign finance web sites must be structured and maintained, (2) the information required to be reported on a web site regarding each contribution that must be reported, and (3) the process by which information required to be

reported on a web site will be verified for accuracy and timeliness (new sec. 3517.102(E)).

- Specifies that the reporting of contribution information on a campaign finance web site is in addition to any other reporting required under other provisions of the Campaign Finance Law (new sec. 3517.102(F)).
- Requires the Secretary of State to store on computer the contribution information required to be reported on a campaign finance web site (sec. 3517.106(B)(2)).
- Extends various provisions of the Campaign Finance Law generally applicable to the filing of campaign finance statements by electronic means of transmission to the filing of reports of contributions on campaign finance web sites (secs. 3517.10(C)(6) and (D)(6) and (7), 3517.106(H), (I), (J), and (K), and 3517.154(A)(3)(a)(v)).

#### **County political party state candidate funds**

- Eliminates provisions permitting county political parties to establish state candidate funds (sec. 3517.10(D)(3)(c)).
- Eliminates provisions prohibiting a county political party from disbursing moneys from any account other than a state candidate fund to make contributions to state candidate funds, legislative campaign funds, or campaign committees for candidates for statewide office or the office of member of the General Assembly (sec. 3517.13(T)).
- Prohibits a county political party state candidate fund in existence on the bill's effective date from accepting any additional contributions on or after that date (Section 3(A)).
- Requires all moneys in a county political party state candidate fund on the bill's effective date to be expended by the county political party within two years after that date, and specifies that the fund must be abolished once those moneys are expended (Section 3(B)).

#### **Carry-in limits**

- Eliminates "carry-in limits"--limitations on the amount of funds that a candidate may carry into a campaign from prior campaigns and fundraising--and associated penalties, and eliminates the associated

requirement that campaign committees dispose of excess funds and excess aggregate contributions (secs. 3517.109 and 3517.1010--outright repealed and secs. 3517.154(A)(2)(a), 3517.155(D), and 3517.992--amended).

- Eliminates carry-in limits and associated penalties applicable to legislative campaign funds, and eliminates the associated requirement that funds in excess of the carry-in limits be disposed of in a specified manner (sec. 3517.102(E) and (F)--outright repealed and sec. 3517.992--amended).
- Eliminates campaign finance statements required to be filed identifying the amount of excess funds and excess aggregate contributions that a campaign committee or legislative campaign fund disposed of and the manner in which those funds were disposed (secs. 3517.102, 3517.109, and 3517.1010--outright repealed).
- Eliminates provisions authorizing the Ohio Elections Commission to direct the Secretary of State or a board of elections to remove a candidate's name from the ballot if the candidate's campaign committee fails to dispose of excess funds or excess aggregate contributions (sec. 3517.155(A)(1)(d)).

### **Miscellaneous changes**

- Eliminates obsolete provisions of the Campaign Finance Law permitting campaign committees of candidates for the office of member of the General Assembly to file their campaign finance statements on computer disk with a board of elections before March 1, 2004 (secs. 3517.10(A), 3517.106(F), and 3517.11(A)(2) and (B)(3)(a)).
- Eliminates obsolete provisions of the Campaign Finance Law requiring certain campaign committees of candidates for the office of member of the General Assembly that file their campaign finance statements by paper with a board of elections to pay a graduated fee (sec. 3517.106(F)).
- Eliminates obsolete provisions of the Campaign Finance Law that phased-in the mandatory filing of campaign finance statements by electronic means of transmission to the office of the Secretary of State

for certain campaign committees and other entities (sec. 3517.106(F) and (G)).

- Relocates the provision that establishes the Ohio Elections Commission Fund, as it is located in a section of law that the bill outright repeals (secs. 3517.152(I) and 3517.155(E)--amended and sec. 3517.102(E)(2)(b)--outright repealed).
- Relocates a definition of a "statewide candidate," as the existing definition is located in a section of law that the bill repeals (sec. 3517.20(A)(1)(d)).

**Effective date**

- Specifies that the bill takes effect on January 1, 2006 (Section 4).

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**HISTORY**

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	07-13-04	p. 2137

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