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AB-946 Political Reform Act of 1974. (2019-2020)

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Assembly Bill No. 946

CHAPTER 315

An act to amend Sections 83123.5, 84202.7, 84252, 84305, 84602, and 87500.2 of, and to repeal Sections 81016, 82009, 83123, and 84200.6 of, the Government Code, relating to the Political Reform Act of 1974.

[Approved by Governor September 20, 2019. Filed with Secretary of State September 20, 2019.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 946, Committee on Elections and Redistricting. Political Reform Act of 1974.

The Political Reform Act of 1974 regulates a variety of aspects of the elections process and governmental ethics including, among other things, campaign funds, lobbyists, conflicts of interest, and the preparation of ballot pamphlets. A person who willfully violates the act is subject to criminal, civil, and administrative penalties.

This bill would repeal various obsolete or extraneous provisions of the act, and would make conforming and other nonsubstantive changes.

The Political Reform Act of 1974, an initiative measure, provides that the Legislature may amend the act to further the act's purposes upon a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of each house of the Legislature and compliance with specified procedural requirements.

This bill would declare that it furthers the purposes of the act.

Vote: 2/3 Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: no Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 81016 of the Government Code is repealed.

SEC. 2. Section 82009 of the Government Code is repealed.

SEC. 3. Section 83123 of the Government Code is repealed.

SEC. 4. Section 83123.5 of the Government Code is amended to read:

83123.5. (a) Upon mutual agreement between the Commission and the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Bernardino, the Commission is authorized to assume primary responsibility for the impartial, effective administration, implementation, and enforcement of a local campaign finance reform ordinance passed by the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Bernardino. The Commission is authorized to be the civil prosecutor responsible for the civil enforcement of that local campaign finance

reform ordinance in accordance with this title. As the civil prosecutor of the County of San Bernardino's local campaign finance reform ordinance, the Commission may do both of the following:

(1) Investigate possible violations of the local campaign finance reform ordinance.

(2) Bring administrative actions in accordance with this title and Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 11500) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2.

(b) Any local campaign finance reform ordinance of the County of San Bernardino enforced by the Commission pursuant to this section shall comply with this title.

(c) The Board of Supervisors of the County of San Bernardino shall consult with the Commission prior to adopting and amending any local campaign finance reform ordinance that is subsequently enforced by the Commission pursuant to this section.

(d) (1) The Board of Supervisors of the County of San Bernardino and the Commission may enter into any agreements necessary and appropriate to carry out the provisions of this section, including agreements pertaining to any necessary reimbursement of state costs with county funds for costs incurred by the Commission in administering, implementing, or enforcing a local campaign finance reform ordinance pursuant to this section.

(2) An agreement entered into pursuant to this subdivision shall not contain any form of a cancellation fee, a liquidated damages provision, or other financial disincentive to the exercise of the right to terminate the agreement pursuant to subdivision (e), except that the Commission may require the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Bernardino to pay the Commission for services rendered and any other expenditures reasonably made by the Commission in anticipation of services to be rendered pursuant to the agreement in the event that the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Bernardino terminates the agreement.

(e) The Board of Supervisors of the County of San Bernardino or the Commission may, at any time, by ordinance or resolution, terminate any agreement made pursuant to this section for the Commission to administer, implement, or enforce a local campaign finance reform ordinance or any provision thereof.

SEC. 5. Section 84200.6 of the Government Code is repealed.

SEC. 6. Section 84202.7 of the Government Code is amended to read:

84202.7. During an odd-numbered year, any committee by virtue of Section 82013 that makes contributions totaling ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or more to elected state officers, their controlled committees, or committees primarily formed to support or oppose any elected state officer during a period specified below shall file campaign statements on the following dates:

(a) No later than April 30 for the period of January 1 through March 31.

(b) No later than October 31 for the period of July 1 through September 30.

SEC. 7. Section 84252 of the Government Code is amended to read:

84252. A committee primarily formed to support or oppose a LAFCO proposal shall file all statements required under this chapter except that, in lieu of the statements required by Sections 84200 and 84202.3, the committee shall file monthly campaign statements from the time circulation of a petition begins until a measure is placed on the ballot or, if a measure is not placed on the ballot, until the committee is terminated pursuant to Section 84214. The committee shall file an original and one copy of each statement on the 15th day of each calendar month, covering the prior calendar month, with the clerk of the county in which the measure may be voted on. If the petition results in a measure that is placed on the ballot, the committee thereafter shall file campaign statements required by this chapter.

SEC. 8. Section 84305 of the Government Code is amended to read:

84305. (a) (1) Except as provided in subdivision (b), a candidate, candidate controlled committee established for an elective office for the controlling candidate, or political party committee shall not send a mass mailing unless the name, street address, and city of the candidate or committee are shown on the outside of each piece of mail in the mass mailing and on at least one of the inserts included within each piece of mail of the mailing in no less than 6-point type that is in a color or print that contrasts with the background so as to be easily legible. A post office box may be stated in lieu of a street address if the candidate's, candidate controlled committee established for an elective office for the controlling candidate's, or political party committee's address is a matter of public record with the Secretary of State.

(2) Except as provided in subdivision (b), a committee, other than a candidate controlled committee established for an elective office for the controlling candidate or a political party committee, shall not send a mass mailing that is not required to include a

disclosure pursuant to Section 84502 unless the name, street address, and city of the committee is shown on the outside of each piece of mail in the mass mailing and on at least one of the inserts included within each piece of mail of the mailing in no less than 6-point type that is in a color or print that contrasts with the background so as to be easily legible. A post office box may be stated in lieu of a street address if the committee's address is a matter of public record with the Secretary of State.

(b) If the sender of the mass mailing is a single candidate or committee, the name, street address, and city of the candidate or committee need only be shown on the outside of each piece of mail.

(c) (1) A candidate, candidate controlled committee established for an elective office for the controlling candidate, or political party committee shall not send a mass electronic mailing unless the name of the candidate or committee is shown in the electronic mailing preceded by the words "Paid for by" in at least the same size font as a majority of the text in the electronic mailing.

(2) A committee, other than a candidate controlled committee established for an elective office for the controlling candidate or a political party committee, shall not send a mass electronic mailing that is not required to include a disclosure pursuant to Section 84502 or 84504.3 unless the name of the committee is shown in the electronic mailing preceded by the words "Paid for by" in at least the same size font as a majority of the text in the electronic mailing.

(d) If the sender of a mass mailing is a controlled committee, the name of the person controlling the committee shall be included in addition to the information required by subdivision (a).

(e) For purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

(1) "Mass electronic mailing" means sending more than two hundred substantially similar pieces of electronic mail within a calendar month.

(2) "Sender" means the candidate, candidate controlled committee established for an elective office for the controlling candidate, or political party committee who pays for the largest portion of expenditures attributable to the designing, printing, and posting of the mailing which are reportable pursuant to Sections 84200 to 84216.5, inclusive.

(3) To "pay for" a share of the cost of a mass mailing means to make, to promise to make, or to incur an obligation to make, any payment: (A) to any person for the design, printing, postage, materials, or other costs of the mailing, including salaries, fees, or commissions, or (B) as a fee or other consideration for an endorsement or, in the case of a ballot measure, support or opposition, in the mailing.

(f) This section does not apply to a mass mailing or mass electronic mailing that is paid for by an independent expenditure.

SEC. 9. Section 84602 of the Government Code is amended to read:

84602. (a) To implement the Legislature's intent, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Commission, notwithstanding any other provision of this code, shall do all of the following:

(1) Develop online and electronic filing processes for use by persons and entities specified in Section 84605 that are required to file statements and reports with the Secretary of State's office pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 84100), Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 85100), and Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 86100). Those processes shall each enable a user to comply with all of the disclosure requirements of this title and shall include, at a minimum, both of the following:

(A) A means or method whereby filers subject to this chapter may submit required filings free of charge. Any means or method developed pursuant to this subparagraph shall not provide any additional or enhanced functions or services that exceed the minimum requirements necessary to fulfill the disclosure provisions of this title.

(B) The definition of a nonproprietary standardized record format or formats using industry standards for the transmission of the data that is required of those persons and entities specified in Section 84605 and that conforms with the disclosure requirements of this title. The Secretary of State shall hold public hearings before development of the record format or formats as a means to ensure that affected entities have an opportunity to provide input into the development process.

(2) Accept test files from software vendors and others wishing to file reports electronically, for the purpose of determining whether the file format is in compliance with the standardized record format developed pursuant to paragraph (1) and is compatible with the Secretary of State's system for receiving the data. A list of the software and service providers who have submitted acceptable test files shall be published by the Secretary of State and made available to the public. Acceptably formatted files shall be submitted by a filer in order to meet the requirements of this chapter.

(3) Develop a system that provides for the online or electronic transfer of the data specified in this section using telecommunications technology that ensures the integrity of the data transmitted and that creates safeguards against efforts to tamper with or subvert the data.

(4) Make all the data filed available on the internet in an easily understood format that provides the greatest public access. The data shall be made available free of charge and as soon as possible after receipt. All late contribution and late independent expenditure reports, as defined by Sections 84203 and 84204, respectively, shall be made available on the internet within 24 hours of receipt. The data made available on the internet shall not contain the street name and building number of the persons or entity representatives listed on the electronically filed forms or any bank account number required to be disclosed pursuant to this title.

(5) Develop a procedure for filers to comply with the requirement that they sign under penalty of perjury pursuant to Section 81004.

(6) Maintain all filed data online for 10 years after the date it is filed, and then archive the information in a secure format.

(7) Provide assistance to those seeking public access to the information.

(8) Implement sufficient technology to seek to prevent unauthorized alteration or manipulation of the data.

(9) Provide the Commission with necessary information to enable it to assist agencies, public officials, and others with the compliance with, and administration of, this title.

(b) (1) To implement the Legislature's intent, as described in Section 84601, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Commission, shall develop an online filing and disclosure system for use by persons and entities specified in Section 84605 that are required to file statements and reports with the Secretary of State's office pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 84100), Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 85100), and Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 86100). The system shall enable a user to comply with all of the disclosure requirements of this title and shall include, at minimum, all of the following:

(A) A data-driven means or method that allows filers subject to this chapter to submit required filings free of charge in a manner that facilitates public searches of the data and does all of the following:

(i) Enables a filer to comply with all of the disclosure requirements of this title, including by entering or uploading requisite data or by indicating that the filer had no reportable activity during a particular reporting period.

(ii) Retains previously submitted data so that a filer can access that data to amend disclosures or prepare future disclosures. The system shall permit a filer to enter a contribution or independent expenditure transaction once and have the transaction appear on both a transactional report required by Section 84203, 84204, 84204.5, 84309, or 85500 and a periodic campaign statement required by this title.

(iii) Ensures the security of data entered and stored in the system.

(iv) To the extent feasible, is compatible with potential future capability to accept statements from filers specified in subdivisions (b) to (e), inclusive, of Section 84215.

(B) The definition of a nonproprietary standardized record format or formats using industry standards for the transmission of the data that is required of those persons and entities specified in Section 84605 and that conforms with the disclosure requirements of this title.

(2) The Secretary of State shall do all of the following with respect to the online filing and disclosure system developed pursuant to this subdivision:

(A) Accept test files from software vendors and others wishing to file reports electronically for the purpose of determining whether the file format is in compliance with the standardized record format developed pursuant to this subdivision and is compatible with the Secretary of State's system for receiving the data. The Secretary of State shall publish and make available to the public a list of the software and service providers who have submitted acceptable test files. A filer shall submit acceptably formatted files in order to meet the requirements of this chapter.

(B) Make the data filed available on the internet as follows:

(i) In a user-friendly, easily understandable format that provides the greatest public access, including online searches and machine-readable downloads of all data contained in the system, except as specified in clause (iii).

(ii) Free of charge and as soon as possible after receipt, or, in the case of late contribution, late in-kind contribution, and late independent expenditure reports, as defined by Sections 84203, 84203.3, and 84204, respectively, within 24 hours of receipt.

(iii) Not containing the street name or building number of the persons or entity representatives listed on the electronically filed forms or any bank account number required to be disclosed pursuant to this title, except that a nonresidential

address of a committee under Section 82013 may be made available on the internet.

(iv) In a manner that allows the public to track and aggregate contributions from the same contributor across filers using a permanent unique identifier assigned by the Secretary of State for this purpose. The Secretary of State shall assign this identifier to, at minimum, each contributor who makes contributions totaling ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or more in a calendar year to, or at the behest of, candidates or committees that file electronically with the Secretary of State pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 84215 or who files with the Secretary of State as a major donor committee under subdivision (c) of Section 82013.

(C) Develop a procedure for filers to comply electronically with the requirement to sign under penalty of perjury pursuant to Section 81004. The electronic signature procedure shall allow the filer to file with the Secretary of State and shall not require an original signature to be filed.

(D) Maintain all filed data online for at least 20 years after the date it is filed, and then archive the information in a secure format.

(E) Provide assistance to those seeking public access to the information.

(F) Implement sufficient technology to seek to prevent unauthorized alteration or manipulation of the data.

(G) Provide the Commission with necessary information to enable it to assist agencies, public officials, and others in complying with and administering this title.

(3) The Secretary of State shall do all of the following with respect to developing the online filing and disclosure system and record format pursuant to this subdivision:

(A) Consult with the Assembly Committee on Elections and Redistricting, the Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments, the Commission, users, filers, and other stakeholders, as appropriate, about functions of the online filing and disclosure system.

(B) In consultation with the Commission, and no later than July 31, 2017, hold at least one public hearing to receive input about developing the online filing and disclosure system and record format.

(C) No later than December 31, 2017, submit a report to the Assembly Committee on Elections and Redistricting and the Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments that includes a plan for the online filing and disclosure system, describes how members of the public will be able to query and retrieve data from the system, and includes a plan for integrating statements as specified in clause (iv) of subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1).

(4) The Secretary of State shall make the online filing and disclosure system developed pursuant to this subdivision available for use no later than February 2021.

(5) The Secretary of State may accept any funds, services, equipment, or grants to further this subdivision, provided that the Secretary of State shall notify the Assembly Committee on Elections and Redistricting and the Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments upon accepting any amount valued at one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) or more.

(6) Because the provisions of this chapter need to be implemented as expeditiously as possible, the information technology procurement requirements described in Chapter 5.6 (commencing with Section 11545) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of this code, and in Section 12100 of the Public Contract Code, do not apply to development of the online filing and disclosure system pursuant to this subdivision. The Secretary of State shall consult with the Department of Technology, as appropriate, in developing the online filing and disclosure system, in order to maximize project success, minimize life-cycle costs, and ensure the security of the system and its data.

(7) (A) Before making the system developed pursuant to this subdivision available for public use, the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Commission, shall test the system to ensure its functionality and then certify that the system meets all the requirements of this subdivision. The Secretary of State may consult with the Department of Technology as needed to fulfill the secretary's duties under this paragraph.

(B) After the system developed pursuant to this subdivision is certified, the system described in subdivision (a) shall no longer accept reports and filings, unless otherwise directed by the Secretary of State and the Commission. The system described in subdivision (a) shall continue to allow public access to past disclosures unless the Secretary of State migrates that data into the system described in this subdivision. To facilitate data conversion during migration, the Secretary of State may make minor technical modifications or corrections to the migrated data.

(c) On or before December 31, 2017, and on or before every April 15, July 15, October 15, and January 15 thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to the chairs of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee and the fiscal committees of the Legislature a quarterly report on the progress of the Cal-Access Project. Specifically, the Secretary of State shall certify whether the secretary (1) anticipates making or has made any changes to the project's scope, schedule, or budget and (2) considers any problems to be a risk to the project's completion according to the approved project schedule and budget. This reporting requirement shall end upon the completion or termination of the Cal-Access Project.

SEC. 10. Section 87500.2 of the Government Code is amended to read:

87500.2. (a) An agency may permit the electronic filing of a statement of economic interests required by Article 2 (commencing with Section 87200) or Article 3 (commencing with Section 87300), including amendments, in accordance with regulations adopted by the Commission.

(b) In consultation with interested agencies, the Commission shall use common database integration features in developing database design requirements for all electronic filings that may be used.

(c) (1) An agency that intends to permit electronic filing of a statement of economic interests shall submit a proposal, which shall include a description of the electronic filing system that the agency proposes to use, to the Commission for approval and certification. An agency that submits a proposal shall include a fee of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) that is payable to the Commission for the costs of approving and certifying the proposal.

(2) An agency shall not charge a person to electronically file a statement of economic interests.

(3) The Commission shall review an agency's proposal for compliance with the system requirement regulations adopted pursuant to subdivisions (a) and (b) and the requirements of subdivision (d). If the proposed system complies with these requirements, the Commission shall approve and certify the agency's electronic filing system as soon as practicable after receiving the agency's submitted proposal.

(d) An agency's proposed electronic filing system shall meet the following requirements:

(1) A statement of economic interests filed electronically shall include an electronic transmission that is submitted under penalty of perjury and that conforms to subdivision (b) of Section 1633.11 of the Civil Code.

(2) (A) The agency's filing officer shall issue to a person who electronically files their statement of economic interests or amendment an electronic confirmation that notifies the filer that their statement of economic interests or amendment was received. The confirmation shall include the date and the time that the statement of economic interests or amendment was received by the filing officer and the method by which the filer may view and print the data received by the filing officer.

(B) A copy retained by the filer of a statement of economic interests or amendment that was electronically filed and the confirmation issued pursuant to subparagraph (A) that shows that the filer timely filed their statement of economic interests or amendment shall create a rebuttable presumption that the filer timely filed their statement of economic interests or amendment.

(3) The agency shall utilize an electronic filing system that includes layered security to ensure data integrity. The system shall have the capability to uniquely identify a filer electronically when the filer accesses the electronic filing system. The operational process for the system shall include industry best practices to ensure that the security and integrity of the data and information contained in the statement of economic interests are not jeopardized or compromised.

(4) The agency shall provide the public with a copy of an official's statement of economic interests upon request, in accordance with Section 81008. The copy of the electronically filed statement of economic interests shall be identical to the statement of economic interests published by the Commission and shall include the date that the statement was filed.

(e) The Commission may adopt regulations to require that an agency redact information on a statement of economic interests prior to posting the statement of economic interests on the internet.

(f) The Commission may conduct discretionary audits of an agency's approved and certified electronic filing system to evaluate its performance and compliance with the requirements of this section.

(g) The Commission shall accept an electronic copy of a statement of economic interests that is forwarded to it by an agency that has received an electronically filed statement from a filer pursuant to this section.

(h) A city or county shall not continue to use an electronic filing system if the Commission does not approve and certify that electronic filing system as complying with the requirements of the Commission's regulations and the other requirements of this section.

SEC. 11. Regardless of the order of chaptering, Section 8 of this act shall not become operative if (1) this bill and Assembly Bill 864 are both chaptered and become effective on or before January 1, 2020, and (2) Assembly Bill 864 amends Section 84305 of the Government Code.

SEC. 12. The Legislature finds and declares that this bill furthers the purposes of the Political Reform Act of 1974 within the meaning of subdivision (a) of Section 81012 of the Government Code.