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SB-321 Late signature curing expenditure reports. (2025-2026)

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AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 06, 2025

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 17, 2025

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2025–2026 REGULAR SESSION

SENATE BILL

NO. 321

Introduced by Senator Cervantes

February 11, 2025

An act to add Sections 82036.6 and 84208 to the Government Code, relating to the Political Reform Act of 1974.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 321, as amended, Cervantes. Late signature curing expenditure reports.

The Political Reform Act of 1974 provides for the comprehensive regulation of campaign financing, including requiring the filing of reports of contributions and expenditures. Existing law requires a committee that makes an independent expenditure for or against a specific candidate or measure during the 90-day period preceding the date of the election or on the date of the election to report the independent expenditure within 24 hours of the time it is made, as specified.

Existing law requires an elections official, upon receiving a vote by mail ballot, to compare the signature on the identification envelope with the voter's signature appearing on specified voter registration records. Existing law requires the elections official to notify a voter whose signature does not match or who failed to sign the envelope of the opportunity to verify the signature or provide a signature, as applicable.

This bill would require a committee that makes a late signature curing expenditure, as defined, to report the late signature curing expenditure within 24 hours of the time it is made. The bill would define "late signature curing expenditure" to mean an expenditure made by a committee related to ballot curing activities that occurs after the date of the election and before the certification of the election, as specified. The bill would provide that this late signature curing expenditure report is in addition to any other campaign statement required under the act.

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.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

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

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

SECTION 1. Section 82036.6 is added to the Government Code, to read:

82036.6. "Late signature curing expenditure" means an expenditure made by a committee related to ballot curing activities described in Section 3019 of the Elections Code that occurs after the date of the election and before the certification of the election. "Late signature curing expenditure" includes any expenditure made for the purpose of contacting a person regarding a signature verification statement or an unsigned verification envelope statement received pursuant to subdivision (d) or (e) of Section 3019 of the Elections Code.

SEC. 2. Section 84208 is added to the Government Code, to read:

84208. (a) (1) A committee that makes a late signature curing expenditure, as defined in Section 82036.6, shall report the late signature curing expenditure within 24 hours of the time it is made. A late signature curing expenditure ~~shall be reported online or electronically, if required, or if filing in a paper format, by email, fax, guaranteed overnight delivery, or personal delivery. If a late signature curing expenditure is required to be reported to the Secretary of State, the report to the Secretary of State shall be by online or electronic transmission only.~~ *report shall be filed pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 81004.* A late signature curing expenditure shall be reported on subsequent campaign statements without regard to reports filed pursuant to this section.

(2) Within two years of the Secretary of State certifying the online filing and disclosure system pursuant to paragraph (7) of subdivision (b) of Section 84602, the Secretary of State shall make the late signature curing expenditure report available for filing using that online filing and disclosure system.

(b) A committee that makes a late signature curing expenditure shall report its full name and street address, as well as the name, office, and district of the candidate if the report is related to a candidate, or if the report is related to a measure, the number or letter of the measure, whether the expenditure was made to support or oppose the candidate or ballot measure, the jurisdiction in which the measure is to be voted upon, and the amount and the date, as well as a description of goods or services for which the late signature curing expenditure was made.

(c) A committee that makes a late signature curing expenditure shall file the late signature curing expenditure report in the places in which it would be required to file campaign statements under this article as if it were formed or existing primarily to support or oppose the candidate or measure for or against which it is making the late signature curing expenditure.

(d) A report filed pursuant to this section shall be in addition to any other campaign statement required to be filed by this article.

SEC. 3. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.

SEC. 4. 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.