



OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Terry Steele

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Bill: S.B. 44 of the 132nd G.A.

Status: As Reported by Senate Government Oversight & Reform

Sponsor: Sen. LaRose

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

Subject: Expands the number of campaign financing statements that may be filed electronically

State and Local Fiscal Highlights

- The bill expands the number of permissible electronic campaign finance statement filings. Filing these statements electronically could reduce administrative costs that county boards of elections incur for processing and forwarding these statements to the Secretary of State.
- Because the Secretary of State currently has procedures in place and retains other electronic filings and makes them available to the public, any additional costs from the bill would likely be minimal. Any additional costs that might be incurred would be paid from Fund 5990 appropriation item 050630, Elections Support Supplement.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

The bill expands the categories of political entities that are permitted to file their campaign finance statements electronically to include candidates for member of the State Board of Education, candidates for local offices and certain political entities. The table below shows the filings that are electronically permitted by the bill.

Permitted Electronic Filings in S.B. 44		
Filing Entity	Threshold for Mandatory Filings	Where to File
Candidate for member of State Board of Education	None; electronic filing optional	Secretary of State
Candidate for an office other than a statewide office, member of the General Assembly, or judge of a court of appeals	None; electronic filing optional	Board of elections
County political party, with respect to contributions and expenditures other than those pertaining to the party's state candidate fund	None; electronic filing optional	Board of elections
Political action committee or political contributing entity whose contributions are expenditures pertain only to local candidates and issues	None; electronic filing optional	Board of elections
Individual, partnership, or other entity making independent expenditures in support of or opposition to a candidate or ballot issue other than a statewide candidate or statewide ballot issue	None; electronic filing optional	Board of elections

Under the bill, a board of elections that receives an electronic campaign finance statement must transmit that statement to the Secretary of State within five business days after receiving it. Any addendum or amendment to a statement must be transmitted to the Secretary not later than the close of business on the day the board received it. Overall, the permissive provisions of the bill, if used, would appear to reduce the administrative costs boards of elections would incur for filing and retaining campaign finance statements and forwarding those statements to the Secretary of State.

The bill requires the Secretary of State to prescribe by rule the procedures for filing electronic statements with the Secretary of State. Presumably, these rules would mirror those that exist for current electronic filings. The bill also requires the Secretary of State to retain these new electronic campaign finance statements and make those statements available to the public in the same manner as current electronically filed statements. Overall, it would appear that the Secretary of State's current procedures in place for electronic filings would simply be applied to the new filings permitted under the bill. There could be some minimal additional administrative cost associated with retaining additional records and making them available to the public. Under the Secretary of State's current budget, any additional costs would likely be paid from GRF appropriations. However, H.B. 49, the pending main operating budget proposal for the FY 2018-FY 2019 biennium, does not provide any GRF funding for the Secretary of State's budget. Instead, elections-related expenses would be paid from the Business Services Fund (Fund 5990) appropriation item 050630, Elections Support Supplement.