

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

FILE NUMBER: S.F. 758

DATE: February 14, 2008

Version: As introduced

Authors: Pelowski and others

Subject: Ballot Question Lobbying Activities

Analyst: Matt Gehring, 651-296-5052

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Overview

This bill exempts lobbying activity at the legislature related to certifying a ballot question for placement on a statewide ballot from the campaign finance reporting requirements in chapter 10A. It addresses, in part, the distinction between lobbying the legislature on placement of a constitutional amendment on the ballot and campaigning for voters to actually approve or reject the proposed amendment.

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1 **Ballot Questions.** Under current law, expenditures in excess of \$100 on activities designed to promote or defeat a ballot question must be reported to the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board as campaign expenditures under section 10A.20. This reporting requirement includes lobbying activities at the legislature designed to promote passage of legislation that would place ballot questions (such as constitutional amendments) on the statewide ballot.

This bill would exempt certain lobbying activities from that requirement: lobbying activity supporting or opposing a ballot question at the legislature (in other words, supporting or opposing “qualifying the question for placement on the ballot”) would not be reported as a campaign expense by the political committee, fund, party unit, or individual making the expenditure under section 10A.20. However, these expenses would still need to be reported as lobbying expenses by the lobbyist, consistent with the requirements in section 10A.04. Once approved by the legislature for submission to the voters, expenses directed at supporting or opposing the actual issue on the ballot must still be reported as a campaign

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expenditure; those requirements are unaffected by this bill.

- 2** **Effective Date:** The reporting-requirement exemption would apply retroactively from January 1, 2007 .