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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

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A N A C T

RELATING TO ELECTIONS - CAMPAIGN FINANCE

Introduced By: Representatives Edwards, Canario, Messier, Hearn, and Newberry

Date Introduced: January 13, 2016

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 17-25-7 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-25 entitled "Rhode
2 Island Campaign Contributions and Expenditures Reporting" is hereby amended to read as
3 follows:

4 **17-25-7. Contents of reports to be filed by treasurers of candidates and committees.**

5 -- (a) Each campaign treasurer of a candidate, each state and municipal committee of a political
6 party, and each political action committee shall keep accurate records and make a full report,
7 upon a form prescribed by the board of elections, of all contributions received and expenditures
8 made by it in excess of a total of one hundred dollars (\$100) from any one source within a
9 calendar year, in furtherance of the nomination, election, or defeat of any candidate or the
10 approval or rejection of any question submitted to the voters, or at any financial town meeting,
11 financial town referendum, or other election at which amendments to a city or town charter are
12 proposed, during the period from the date of the last report, or in the case of the initial report,
13 beginning on the date of the appointment of the campaign treasurer for state and municipal
14 committees and political action committees and on the date a person becomes a "candidate" as
15 defined in § 17-25-3(2) for individual candidates. The report shall contain the name, address and
16 place of employment of each person or source from whom the contributions and expenditures in
17 excess of one hundred dollars (\$100) were received or made and the amount contributed or
18 expended by each person or source. The report shall be filed with the board of elections on the
19 dates designated in § 17-25-11. The campaign treasurer of the candidate, or committee reporting,

1 shall certify to the correctness of each report. ~~This~~ Notwithstanding any other provisions
2 contained in this title, this subsection shall apply to any person or entity advocating the approval
3 or rejection of any question presented to voters at any financial town meeting, financial town
4 referendum or other election at which amendments to a city or town charter are proposed, which
5 shall file reports of contributions or expenditures ~~every seven (7) days~~ in accordance with the
6 filing schedule established by §17-25-11 if the total of the money so expended exceeds one
7 hundred dollars (\$100) in a calendar year. ~~notwithstanding any other provisions contained in this~~
8 ~~title.~~ As used in this subsection, the word "entity" means any political action committee, political
9 party committee, authorized campaign committee of a candidate or officer holder, corporation,
10 whether for profit, not-for-profit, or exempt nonprofit pursuant to 26 U.S.C.§501(c)(3) of the
11 Internal Revenue Code, domestic corporation or foreign corporation, as defined in §7-1.2-106,
12 financial institution, cooperative, association, receivership, partnership, committee, union,
13 charity, trust, holding company, firm, joint stock company, public utility, sole proprietorship,
14 limited partnership, or any other entity recognized by the laws of the United States and/or the
15 state of Rhode Island.

16 (b) Each state and municipal committee of a political party shall also file with the board
17 of elections, not later than March 1 of each year, an annual report setting forth in the aggregate all
18 contributions received and all expenditures made during the previous calendar year, whether or
19 not these expenditures were made, incurred, or authorized in furtherance of the election or defeat
20 of any candidate. The treasurer of the committee or organization reporting shall certify to the
21 correctness of each report.

22 (c) Any report filed pursuant to the provisions of this section shall include contributions
23 received from any "testimonial affair", as defined in § 17-25-3, held since the date of the most
24 recent report filed.

25 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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1 This act would clarify the definition of the term "entity" for purposes of campaign
2 finance as it pertains to advocating for the approval or rejection of any question presented to
3 voters at a financial town meeting, financial town referendum, or local election involving charter
4 amendments. The act would include business entities, political action committees, persons and
5 exempt nonprofits in the definition of an "entity". The act would also change the timing of the
6 filing of the campaign finance reports from every seven (7) days to the schedule for the filing of
7 all other campaign finance reports.

8 This act would take effect upon passage.

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