

2013 HOUSE GOVERNMENT AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

HB 1436

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee
Fort Union Room, State Capitol

HB 1436
February 14, 2013
18921

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

Carmen Hart

Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to campaign contribution reporting requirements.

Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

Chairman Jim Kasper opened the hearing on HB 1436.

Rep. Guggisberg appeared in support and as a sponsor of the bill. As you can see, all it will do is require legislative candidates to follow the same rules as statewide candidates as far as reporting. As legislators, the only reports we need to fill annually are contributions over \$200, and this bill would also require us to fill out gross totals of what we have on hand of all contributions. Like Rep. Gruchalla said, I think there is a sentiment out there that there is getting to be too much money in politics and people do not know where it is coming from. They want to know how much candidates have on hand and where it is coming from. All these bills today are a step in the right direction, and I think it is time for North Dakota to step up.

Rep. Gail Mooney You want the expenses minus what was taken in?

Rep. Guggisberg What this bill would require is even your receipts under \$200 you add them up and report those as well. Right now it is just \$200.

Chairman Jim Kasper Have you been made aware of any campaign concerns or is this simply to add some additional disclosure?

Rep. Guggisberg When I go campaigning and knocking on doors, people don't ask me about laws like this, but my name was in the paper when these bills were in the Fargo Forum and people starting asking me what does that bill do? When I tell them that we have very little reporting with our campaign contributions and the fact that I could take the money in my campaign account right now and go on a trip to Mexico and nobody would know, they are appalled by that. When you explain to them the system we have in North Dakota, they think it needs to be changed.

Chairman Jim Kasper Are there hundreds of people telling you this or handsfull?

Rep. Guggisberg No, like I said unfortunately, I just think people aren't aware of the laws but that doesn't mean--they are not aware of many of the laws of our state.

Rep. Mock appeared in support. I want to express my support and really making sure that all candidates that run for office have the same campaign contribution requirements. Right now statewide candidates have separate requirements from legislative candidates. Because there are growing calls for transparency and accountability in government, I think it is certainly appropriate to move a conversation forward that legislative candidates and statewide candidates have the same reports to file and make sure that information is available to the people that they serve.

There was no opposition.

The hearing was closed.

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee
Fort Union Room, State Capitol

HB 1436
February 21, 2013
19346 (Start-6:23)

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

Carmen Hart

Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to campaign contribution reporting requirements.

Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

Chairman Jim Kasper This bill is very similar to 1449 but just a little bit different. Currently the statewide candidates need to report their contributions in excess of \$200, their contributions of \$200 or less and their cash on hand in their account at the beginning and at the end of the filing period. Right now we as legislative candidates do not report our cash on hand at the beginning or the end of the reporting requirement. I frankly have a problem with this bill from a perspective that legislative campaigns are vastly different than statewide campaigns. One of the ways that I see where this could be abused or used in a manner that we as legislative candidates may not like to use is for targeting various candidates. You get to a district where a candidate has no dollars in their account. That would be a great target. We are pretty transparent the way we are.

Rep. Karen Karls I have a problem with Subsection C. Many times at the end of our campaign, we had zero left, but we don't necessarily want the other side to know that. We sometimes start with zero, but sometimes not. Each candidate reports their donations, each district party. If you have a separate campaign organization, they need to report. I really feel like legislative candidates already do enough paperwork and it is usually in the thick of the campaign that you have to make sure you get that report in. I would move a Do not pass.

Vice Chair Randy Boehning seconded.

Rep. Vernon Laning In my particular district we pool our money and put it in the district treasurer's hands. I am not sure how I would even comply with the three. It is not all political contributions. The money we raised from our steak fry I wouldn't think would be part of that. If this bill were to pass, how would my district fulfill that in compliance?

Chairman Jim Kasper That is a good question. It says the cash on hand and the filer's account at the start and the close of the reporting period. The question is who is the filer? Is it each one of us as individuals? Is it our candidate committee? Is it both?

Rep. Gail Mooney Rep. Guggisberg answered that in his testimony when he said it would be up to the particular district to report on that.

Rep. Vernon Laning We spend more than \$200 on steaks. Would I have to report that?

Rep. Gail Mooney This is part of the expenses through the district I would imagine. Like you said, I don't know what the details would be either.

Rep. Ben Koppelman I believe within the reporting requirements now for both legislative candidates as well as legislative districts like your local republican or democratic party, the reports they already have to fill out are dictated by a different section of the law. If you insert legislative candidates in here and then by extension to that sometimes their local districts, you would really have it tough to comply with law. We have a good system the way we have it.

A roll call vote was taken and resulted in **DO NOT PASS, 10-3, 1 ABSENT**. **Rep. Karen Karls** is the carrier.

Date: 2-21-13
 Roll Call Vote #: _____

**2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE
 ROLL CALL VOTES
 BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1436**

House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken: Do Pass Do Not Pass Amended Adopt Amendment
 Rerefer to Appropriations Reconsider

Motion Made By Karls Seconded By Boehning

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Jim Kasper	X		Rep. Bill Amerman		X
Vice Chairman Randy Boehning	X		Rep. Gail Mooney		X
Rep. Jason Dockter	X		Rep. Marie Strinden		
Rep. Karen Karls	X		Rep. Steven Zaiser		X
Rep. Ben Koppelman	X				
Rep. Vernon Laning	X				
Rep. Scott Louser	X				
Rep. Gary Paur	X				
Rep. Karen Rohr	X				
Rep. Vicky Steiner	X				

Total (Yes) 10 No 3

Absent _____

Floor Assignment Karls

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1436: Government and Veterans Affairs Committee (Rep. Kasper, Chairman)
recommends **DO NOT PASS** (10 YEAS, 3 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING).
HB 1436 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.