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Fact Sheet for House Bill 183

Short Title: Campaign Finance: Shared Expenses

Current Version: SCS CS HB 183 (STA)

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Summary:

- Clarifies that a payment for a shared expense made by one candidate that is reimbursed by the other participating candidate(s) within seven days is not an illegal campaign-to-campaign contribution.
- Allows a candidate and political party to share a fundraising list.

Benefits:

- Puts the onus for complying with campaign finance regulations regarding shared expenses on the candidate.
- Reduces paperwork and helps vendors receive prompt payment when providing services for political campaigns.
- Removes a prohibition against sharing a list of nominal value.

Background:

Current statute and regulations do not give clear guidance about payment for shared campaign activities, such as jointly hosted fundraisers. The statute clearly states that one campaign cannot make a contribution to another. The regulations clarify that candidates (or groups) may share campaign efforts if the costs and income are accounted for separately. The regulation has been interpreted to prohibit one candidate from paying a bill in full then collecting a reimbursement from each participating candidate.

This prohibition puts the burden on businesses to collect from each candidate on a pro-rata basis and reimburse any funds received over the pro-rata amount. House Bill 183 would allow for one candidate to make the expenditure and then collect from the other campaigns within seven days, thereby reducing the burden on businesses.

Revised 4/28/2005