

California Political Treasurers' Association – Legislative Ideas

Eliminate Extra Copy of Paper Filing – Campaign Statements

This proposal is to amend Section 84215 to remove the requirement to file an additional copy of a campaign statement along with the original filing in local jurisdictions that don't have e-filing.

For example, if I file an original Form 460 with 300 pages in Palm Springs (Palm Springs doesn't have e-filing), I must also mail a copy of the statement – so I'm now mailing 600 pages. Often times filing officers will mail the entire second copy back to the treasurer only for us to toss it. It's a waste of paper.

After the passage of AB 2151 – Stats. 2020, Ch. 214 that added Section 84616 which requires local jurisdictions to post campaign statements on their website, filing an additional copy is a moot point. The historical reason for filing the copy was for public viewing (so that filing officers didn't have to make their own copy for public viewing and/or provide the original for public viewing).

Increase Campaign Statement Itemization Thresholds

Increase contribution itemization on campaign statements from \$100 to \$200

- This \$100 threshold has been in place since the 70s. The committee qualification amount has been raised twice since then but not the itemization amount.
- In 1999, the Bipartisan Commission recommended increasing these thresholds to \$200.
- Local jurisdictions could always lower this threshold via campaign ordinance if they feel it's too high for their locale.
- This itemization threshold would align with the Federal itemization threshold.
- At the very least, the \$200 threshold should apply to sponsored GP committees. I personally have filed reports that contain more than 5,000 pages and 98 percent of the statements consist of \$125 contributions from the members (all sheriffs who sponsor the committee). The important information on these statements (e.g., to whom the committee made contributions and who was supported/opposed by IEs) gets lost due to the volume of pages. Also, these statements are too big to e-file through the current SOS system and digitally file using the standard Adobe digital signature feature.
- SOS might be in favor of this too – could it help somehow with the CARS system?

Increase Major Donor Qualification Threshold

Increase threshold from \$10,000 to \$25,000 or \$50,000

- This would require ALL state major donors to file electronically (currently there's no e-filing requirement from \$10,000 - \$24,999).
- Currently state major donors must e-file the Form 497 for contributions made of \$1,000 or more even if they aren't required to e-file their major donor statement. This means

major donors must get an e-filing login and password from SOS within 24 hours in order to timely file.

- Thresholds doubled in the early 80s from \$5,000 to \$10,000 but nothing since.
- Now that contribution limits are over \$5K per election, a major donor notice must be sent for the majority of the contributions received.
- Raising the threshold to \$50,000 would align the amount with the top contributor disclosure amount on campaign ads.

Requirement to Post Campaign Ordinances and Information Regarding Contribution Limits Prominently on the Local Jurisdiction's Website

Amend Section 81009.5 to require a local jurisdiction to post their campaign ordinance in a prominent fashion its website – including their contribution limit AFTER the COLA adjustment. Also, if the jurisdiction is subject to AB 571, require that this is stated in a prominent fashion on its website.

It is nearly impossible to find contribution limit information on some jurisdictions' websites and when you call the city clerk's office or election department, many times they aren't even sure what the limits are.

Provide FPPC, FTB and Professional Treasurers Access to Committee Addresses

When a committee makes a contribution of \$100 or more, it is required to report the recipient committee's street address. Many times treasurers must request the recipient's Form 410 from SOS to obtain this information. SOS has now started to redact the address from the Form 410 before emailing it – which doesn't help at all. We now need to track down the treasurer to obtain the committee's street address. This could pose a problem when the contribution is required to be reported within 24 hours.

A solution to this is to require SOS to provide access to all 410s to FPPC, FTB and the Professional Treasurers once the new CARS system is up and running. The bank account information would still be redacted. Having access would save time for SOS staff (they will no longer need to email 410s), FPPC staff, and would ensure timely and accurate campaign report filing by treasurers.

As far as determining who the professional treasurers are, perhaps there can be an "application" of sorts requesting access, stating the number of committees the treasurer has and signing under Penalty of Perjury that having access to the 410s would only be used for this purpose.

This doesn't help in the short term but would be a pivotal benefit once CARS is launched.