

*California*
LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION**AB-1728 Political Reform Act of 1974.** (2013-2014)

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 08, 2014

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2013–2014 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL**No. 1728****Introduced by Assembly Member Garcia****February 14, 2014**

An act to amend Section 84308 of the Government Code, relating to the Political Reform Act of 1974.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1728, as amended, Garcia. Political Reform Act of 1974.

(1) The Political Reform Act of 1974 prohibits an officer of an agency from accepting, soliciting, or directing a contribution of more than \$250 from any party, or his or her agent, or from any participant, or his or her agent, while a proceeding involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use is pending before the agency and for 3 months following the date a final decision is rendered in the proceeding, if the officer knows or has reason to know that the participant has a financial interest, as defined. The act also requires an officer to disclose on the record a contribution of more than \$250 from a party or participant received within the 12 months preceding a decision in a proceeding and would prohibit the official from making, participating in making, or otherwise using his or her official position to influence a decision in a proceeding in which the official knows or has reason to know that the party or participant has a financial interest in the decision.

The act defines an "agency," for these purposes, to mean any state or local government agency, except certain entities, including local governmental agencies whose members are directly elected by the voters. ~~The act defines a "participant," for these purposes, as a person who is not a party but who actively supports or opposes a particular decision in a proceeding involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use and who has a financial interest in the decision.~~ The act defines a "license, permit, or other entitlement for use," for these purposes, to include, among other things, all contracts except competitively bid, labor, or personal employment contracts.

This bill would revise the definition of "agency" to include a local government agency formed pursuant to provisions of the Water Code. The bill would revise the definition of "license, permit, or other entitlement for use" with respect to proceedings before a local government agency formed pursuant to the Water Code to apply to all contracts that are not competitively bid. ~~The bill would deem the financial interests of a person who compensates a participant to actively support or oppose a particular decision in a proceeding on his or her behalf to also be a financial interest of the participant.~~

(2) Violations of the act are punishable as a misdemeanor. By expanding the scope of an existing crime, this bill imposes a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

(3) The Political Reform Act of 1974, an initiative measure, provides that the Legislature may amend the act to further the act's purposes upon a 2/3 vote of each house and compliance with specified procedural requirements.

This bill would declare that it furthers the purposes of the act.

Vote: 2/3 Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 84308 of the Government Code is amended to read:

84308. (a) The definitions set forth in this subdivision shall govern the interpretation of this section.

(1) "Party" means any person who files an application for, or is the subject of, a proceeding involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use.

(2) "Participant" means any person who is not a party but who actively supports or opposes a particular decision in a proceeding involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use and who has a financial interest in the decision, as described in Article 1 (commencing with Section 87100) of Chapter 7. A person actively supports or opposes a particular decision in a proceeding if he or she lobbies in person the officers or employees of the agency, testifies in person before the agency, or otherwise acts to influence officers of the agency.

(3) "Agency" means an agency as defined in Section 82003 except that it does not include the courts or any agency in the judicial branch of government, local governmental agencies whose members are directly elected by the voters except local government agencies formed pursuant to provisions of the Water Code, the Legislature, the Board of Equalization, or constitutional officers. However, this section applies to any person who is a member of an exempted agency but is acting as a voting member of another agency.

(4) "Officer" means any elected or appointed officer of an agency, any alternate to an elected or appointed officer of an agency, and any candidate for elective office in an agency.

(5) "License, permit, or other entitlement for use" means all business, professional, trade, and land use licenses and permits and all other entitlements for use, including all entitlements for land use, all contracts (other than competitively bid, labor, or personal employment contracts), and all franchises. For purposes of proceedings before an agency formed pursuant to provisions of the Water Code, "license, permit, or other entitlement for use" applies to all contracts except contracts that are competitively bid.

(6) "Contribution" includes contributions to candidates and committees in federal, state, or local elections.

(b) No officer of an agency shall accept, solicit, or direct a contribution of more than two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) from any party, or his or her agent, or from any participant, or his or her agent, while a proceeding involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use is pending before the agency and for three months following the date a final decision is rendered in the proceeding if the officer knows or has reason to know that the participant has a financial interest, as that term is used in Article 1 (commencing with Section 87100) of Chapter 7. This prohibition shall apply regardless of whether the officer accepts, solicits, or directs the contribution for himself or herself, or on behalf of any other officer, or on behalf of any candidate for office or on behalf of any committee.

(c) Prior to rendering any decision in a proceeding involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use pending before an agency, each officer of the agency who received a contribution within the preceding 12 months in an amount of more than two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) from a party or from any participant shall disclose that fact on the record of the proceeding. No officer of an agency shall make, participate in making, or in any way attempt to use his or her official position to influence the decision in a proceeding involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use pending before the agency if the officer has willfully or knowingly received a contribution in an amount of more than two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) within the preceding 12 months from a party or his or her agent, or from any participant, or his or her agent if the officer knows or has reason to know that the participant has a financial interest in the decision, as that term is described with respect to public officials in Article 1 (commencing with Section 87100) of Chapter 7.

If an officer receives a contribution which would otherwise require disqualification under this section, returns the contribution within 30 days from the time he or she knows, or should have known, about the contribution and the proceeding involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use, he or she shall be permitted to participate in the proceeding.

(d) A party to a proceeding before an agency involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use shall disclose on the record of the proceeding any contribution in an amount of more than two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) made within the preceding 12 months by the party, or his or her agent, to any officer of the agency. No party, or his or her agent, to a proceeding involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use pending before any agency and no participant, or his or her agent, in the proceeding shall make a contribution of more than two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) to any officer of that agency during the proceeding and for three months following the date a final decision is rendered by the agency in the proceeding. When a closed corporation is a party to, or a participant in, a proceeding involving a license, permit, or other entitlement for use pending before an agency, the majority shareholder is subject to the disclosure and prohibition requirements specified in subdivisions (b), (c), and this subdivision.

~~(e) For purposes of this section, a financial interest as described, with respect to public officials, in Article 1 (commencing with Section 87100) of Chapter 7 of a person on whose behalf a participant receives compensation to actively support or oppose a particular decision in a proceeding is deemed to be a financial interest of the participant.~~

(f)

(e) Nothing in this section shall be construed to imply that any contribution subject to being reported under this title shall not be so reported.

SEC. 2. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.

SEC. 3. The Legislature finds and declares that this bill furthers the purposes of the Political Reform Act of 1974 within the meaning of subdivision (a) of Section 81012 of the Government Code.