



Fiscal Note

Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

SB 25-148: MODIFICATIONS TO CAMPAIGN FINANCE REQUIREMENTS

Prime Sponsors:

Sen. Weissman

Fiscal Analyst:

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Bill Outcome: Postponed Indefinitely**Drafting number:** LLS 25-0553**Version:** Final Fiscal Note**Date:** June 17, 2025

Fiscal note status: The final fiscal note reflects the introduced bill. This bill was postponed indefinitely by the Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee on March 27, 2025; therefore, the impacts identified in this analysis do not take effect.

Summary Information

Overview. The bill would have placed additional campaign finance requirements on lobbyists and change campaign finance disclosure requirements.

Types of impacts. The bill would have affected the following areas on an ongoing basis:

- State Expenditures
- State Revenue

Appropriations. For FY 2025-26, the bill would have required an appropriation of \$180,092 to the Department of State.

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts

Type of Impact ¹	Budget Year FY 2025-26	Out Year FY 2026-27
State Revenue	\$0	\$0
State Expenditures	\$191,187	\$118,532
Transferred Funds	\$0	\$0
Change in TABOR Refunds	\$0	\$0
Change in State FTE	0.6 FTE	1.2 FTE

¹ Fund sources for these impacts are shown in the tables below.

Table 1A
State Expenditures

Fund Source	Budget Year FY 2025-26	Out Year FY 2026-27
General Fund	\$0	\$0
Cash Funds	\$180,092	\$96,343
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0
Centrally Appropriated	\$11,095	\$22,189
Total Expenditures	\$191,187	\$118,532
Total FTE	0.6 FTE	1.2 FTE

Summary of Legislation

Under current law, active lobbyists are prohibited from making campaign contributions while the General Assembly is in session. The bill broadens these restrictions by:

- subjecting people who have been professional lobbyists within the past six months to the restriction; and
- applying the restriction to contributions made when the General Assembly is not in session.

In addition, the bill makes the following changes related to campaign disclosure requirements:

- establishes disclosure requirements for donations over \$1,000 made by nonprofits or by committees registered with the Federal Elections Commission;
- broadens the definition of electioneering communication to include communications that meet all other legal definitions and are distributed 90 days before an election;
- changes deadlines for campaign finance disclosures; and
- requires disclaimers on certain election communications to list the three individuals that contributed the most money for the communication.

State Revenue

Under current law, the Department of State (DOS) is authorized to adjust fees so that the revenue generated approximates its direct and indirect costs. The DOS is primarily funded through business filing fees. To cover the costs described in the State Expenditures section below, fees may need to be raised to cover all or some of the costs of this bill. The fees affected and the actual amount of fee charges will be set administratively by the DOS based on cash fund balance, total program costs, and the estimated number of professional activities subject to fees. This revenue is subject to TABOR.

State Expenditures

The bill increases state expenditures in the DOS by about \$200,000 in FY 2025-26 and \$120,000 in future years. These costs, paid from the DOS Cash fund, are summarized in Table 2 and discussed below.

Table 2
State Expenditures
Department of State

Cost Component	Budget Year FY 2025-26	Out Year FY 2026-27
Personal Services	\$39,154	\$78,307
Operating Expenses	\$768	\$1,536
Capital Outlay Costs	\$6,670	\$0
Administrative Hearing Officer Contract Costs	\$16,500	\$16,500
Campaign & Political Finance System Modifications	\$117,000	\$0
Centrally Appropriated Costs	\$11,095	\$22,189
Total Costs	\$191,187	\$118,532
Total FTE	0.6 FTE	1.2 FTE

Department of State

The DOS will have staff and contract costs beginning January 1, 2026 to process additional complaints as a result of the bill. The estimates discussed below assume that the DOS will receive an additional 30 complaints annually and that 30 percent will be referred to an Administrative Hearing Officer (AHO). Additionally, the DOS will have system modification costs in FY 2025-26 only.

Staff

The DOS requires 1.2 FTE starting January 1, 2026 to process additional complaints. This estimate assumes 70 hours per complaint for processing and investigation and an additional 46 hours per complaint referred to the AHO.

Contract Costs

The DOS currently uses a contract AHO to hear campaign finance related complaints. The contract AHO has a rate of \$200 per hour and it is assumed that an average of 9 hours of hearing time is required per complaint.

System Modification Costs

In FY 2025-26 only, DOS will have \$117,000 in computer programming costs to update its campaign finance reporting system. The fiscal note estimates that these updates will require 780 hours of developer time to track the necessary information to monitor compliance.

Centrally Appropriated Costs

Pursuant to a Joint Budget Committee policy, certain costs associated with this bill are addressed through the annual budget process and centrally appropriated in the Long Bill or supplemental appropriations bills, rather than in this bill. These costs, which may include employee insurance, supplemental employee retirement payments, leased space, and indirect cost assessments, are shown in the expenditure table(s) above.

Effective Date

Sections 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the bill concerning campaign disclosure requirements take effect January 1, 2026. The remainder of the bill concerning requirements placed on lobbyists takes effect 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die. These effective dates apply if no referendum petition is filed.

State Appropriations

For FY 2025-26, the bill requires an appropriation of \$180,092 from the Department of State Cash Fund to the Department of State, and 0.6 FTE.

State and Local Government Contacts

County Clerks

Secretary of State

Law