



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 6904

January Session, 2023



AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPAIGN FINANCE.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (b) of section 9-601b of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
3 *passage*):

4 (b) The term "expenditure" does not mean:

5 (1) A loan of money, made in the ordinary course of business, by a
6 state or national bank;

7 (2) A communication made by any corporation, organization or
8 association solely to its members, owners, stockholders, executive or
9 administrative personnel, or their families;

10 (3) Nonpartisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote campaigns
11 by any corporation, organization or association aimed at its members,
12 owners, stockholders, executive or administrative personnel, or their
13 families;

14 (4) Uncompensated services provided by individuals volunteering
15 their time on behalf of a party committee, political committee, slate
16 committee or candidate committee, including any services provided
17 for the benefit of nonparticipating and participating candidates under

18 the Citizens' Election Program and any unreimbursed travel expenses
19 made by an individual who volunteers the individual's personal
20 services to any such committee. For purposes of this subdivision, an
21 individual is a volunteer if such individual is not receiving
22 compensation for such services regardless of whether such individual
23 received compensation in the past or may receive compensation for
24 similar services that may be performed in the future;

25 (5) Any news story, commentary or editorial distributed through
26 the facilities of any broadcasting station, newspaper, magazine or
27 other periodical, unless such facilities are owned or controlled by any
28 political party, committee or candidate;

29 (6) The use of real or personal property, a portion or all of the cost of
30 invitations and the cost of food or beverages, voluntarily provided by
31 an individual to a candidate, including a nonparticipating or
32 participating candidate under the Citizens' Election Program, or to a
33 party, political or slate committee, in rendering voluntary personal
34 services at the individual's residential premises or a community room
35 in the individual's residence facility, to the extent that the cumulative
36 value of the invitations, food or beverages provided by an individual
37 on behalf of any candidate or committee does not exceed four hundred
38 dollars with respect to any single event or does not exceed eight
39 hundred dollars for any such event hosted by two or more individuals,
40 provided at least one such individual owns or resides at the residential
41 premises, and further provided the cumulative value of the invitations,
42 food or beverages provided by an individual on behalf of any such
43 candidate or committee does not exceed eight hundred dollars with
44 respect to a calendar year or single election, as the case may be;

45 (7) A communication described in subdivision (2) of subsection (a)
46 of this section that includes speech or expression made (A) prior to the
47 ninety-day period preceding the date of a primary or an election at
48 which the clearly identified candidate or candidates are seeking
49 nomination to public office or position, that is made for the purpose of
50 influencing any legislative or administrative action, as defined in

51 section 1-91, or executive action, or (B) during a legislative session for
52 the purpose of influencing legislative action;

53 (8) An organization expenditure by a party committee, legislative
54 caucus committee or legislative leadership committee;

55 (9) A commercial advertisement that refers to an owner, director or
56 officer of a business entity who is also a candidate and that had
57 previously been broadcast or appeared when the owner, director or
58 officer was not a candidate;

59 (10) A communication containing an endorsement on behalf of a
60 candidate for nomination or election to the office of Governor,
61 Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, State Treasurer, State
62 Comptroller, Attorney General, state senator or state representative,
63 from a candidate for the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor,
64 Secretary of the State, State Treasurer, State Comptroller, Attorney
65 General, state senator or state representative, shall not be an
66 expenditure attributable to the endorsing candidate, if the candidate
67 making the endorsement is unopposed at the time of the
68 communication;

69 (11) A communication that is sent by mail to addresses in the district
70 for which a candidate being endorsed by another candidate pursuant
71 to the provisions of this subdivision is seeking nomination or election
72 to the office of state senator or state representative, containing an
73 endorsement on behalf of such candidate for such nomination or
74 election, from a candidate for the office of state senator or state
75 representative, shall not be an expenditure attributable to the
76 endorsing candidate, if the candidate making the endorsement is not
77 seeking election to the office of state senator or state representative for
78 a district that contains any geographical area shared by the district for
79 the office to which the endorsed candidate is seeking nomination or
80 election;

81 (12) Campaign training events provided to multiple individuals by

82 a legislative caucus committee and any associated materials, provided
83 the cumulative value of such events and materials does not exceed six
84 thousand dollars in the aggregate for a calendar year;

85 (13) A lawful communication by any charitable organization which
86 is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal
87 Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding internal
88 revenue code of the United States, as from time to time amended;

89 (14) The use of offices, telephones, computers and similar
90 equipment provided by a party committee, legislative caucus
91 committee or legislative leadership committee that serve as
92 headquarters for or are used by such party committee, legislative
93 caucus committee or legislative leadership committee; [or]

94 (15) An expense or expenses incurred by a human being acting
95 alone in an amount that is two hundred dollars or less, in the
96 aggregate, that benefits a candidate for a single election; or

97 (16) A solicitation via the Internet for a contribution to any
98 committee, provided any such contribution described in this
99 subdivision shall be construed to be an expenditure.

100 Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 9-612 of the general statutes is
101 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
102 *passage*):

103 (a) No individual shall make a contribution or contributions in any
104 one calendar year in excess of [ten] fifteen thousand dollars to the state
105 central committee of any party, or for the benefit of such committee
106 pursuant to its authorization or request; or two thousand dollars to a
107 town committee of any political party, or for the benefit of such
108 committee pursuant to its authorization or request; or two thousand
109 dollars to a legislative caucus committee or legislative leadership
110 committee, or one thousand dollars to any other political committee
111 other than (1) a political committee formed solely to aid or promote the
112 success or defeat of a referendum question, (2) an exploratory

113 committee, (3) a political committee established by an organization, or
114 for the benefit of such committee pursuant to its authorization or
115 request, or (4) a political committee formed by a slate of candidates in
116 a primary for the office of justice of the peace of the same town.

117 Sec. 3. Subdivision (1) of subsection (g) of section 9-7a of the general
118 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
119 (*Effective from passage*):

120 (g) (1) (A) In the case of a written complaint filed with the
121 commission pursuant to section 9-7b, commission staff shall conduct
122 and complete a preliminary examination of such complaint by the
123 fourteenth day following its receipt, at which time such staff shall, at
124 its discretion, [(A)] (i) dismiss the complaint for failure to allege any
125 substantial violation of state election law supported by evidence, [(B)]
126 (ii) engage the respondent in discussions in an effort to speedily
127 resolve any matter pertaining to a de minimis violation, or [(C)] (iii)
128 investigate and docket the complaint for a determination by the
129 commission that probable cause or no probable cause exists for any
130 such violation. If commission staff dismisses a complaint pursuant to
131 subparagraph [(A)] (A)(i) of this subdivision, such staff shall provide a
132 brief written statement concisely setting forth the reasons for such
133 dismissal. If commission staff engages a respondent pursuant to
134 subparagraph [(B)] (A)(ii) of this subdivision but is unable to speedily
135 resolve any such matter described in said subparagraph by the forty-
136 fifth day following receipt of the complaint, such staff shall docket
137 such complaint for a determination by the commission that probable
138 cause or no probable cause exists for any violation of state election law.
139 If the commission does not, by the sixtieth day following receipt of the
140 complaint, either issue a decision or render its determination that
141 probable cause or no probable cause exists for any violation of state
142 election laws, the complainant or respondent may apply to the
143 superior court for the judicial district of Hartford for an order to show
144 cause why the commission has not acted upon the complaint and to
145 provide evidence that the commission has unreasonably delayed

146 action.

147 (B) (i) For any complaint received on or after January 1, 2018, but
148 prior to July 1, 2023, if the commission does not, by one year following
149 receipt of such complaint, issue a decision thereon, the commission
150 shall dismiss such complaint, provided the length of time of any delay
151 caused by [(i)] (I) the commission or commission staff granting any
152 extension or continuance to a respondent prior to the issuance of any
153 such decision, [(ii)] (II) any subpoena issued in connection with such
154 complaint, [(iii)] (III) any litigation in state or federal court related to
155 such complaint, or [(iv)] (IV) any investigation by, or consultation of
156 the commission or commission staff with, the Chief State's Attorney,
157 the Attorney General, the United States Department of Justice or the
158 United States Attorney for Connecticut related to such complaint, shall
159 be added to such one year.

160 (ii) For any complaint received on or after July 1, 2023, if the
161 commission does not, by one year following receipt of such complaint,
162 find reason to believe that a violation of state election law has been
163 committed and commence a contested case, as defined in section 4-166,
164 the commission shall dismiss such complaint, provided the length of
165 time of any delay caused by (I) the commission or commission staff
166 granting any extension or continuance to a respondent prior to the
167 issuance of any such decision, (II) any subpoena issued in connection
168 with such complaint, (III) any litigation in state or federal court related
169 to such complaint, (IV) any investigation by the commission or
170 commission staff involving a potential violation of state election law by
171 a foreign national, as defined in 52 USC 30121(b), as amended from
172 time to time, or of section 9-601c or 9-601d, or (V) any investigation by,
173 or consultation of the commission or commission staff with, the Chief
174 State's Attorney, the Attorney General, the United States Department
175 of Justice or the United States Attorney for Connecticut related to such
176 complaint, shall be added to such one year.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	9-601b(b)
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	9-612(a)
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	9-7a(g)(1)

GAE *Joint Favorable Subst.*