

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas *As Engrossed: H2/4/25 H3/18/25 S4/7/25*
95th General Assembly **A Bill**
Regular Session, 2025

HOUSE BILL 1243

By: Representatives Underwood, Long, Rose, *McAlindon*

By: Senator C. Penzo

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING CAMPAIGN FINANCE;
TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS
AND EXPENDITURES; TO AMEND REPORTING FOR CANDIDATES
FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT, TOWNSHIP, OR MUNICIPAL OFFICE;
TO AMEND REPORTING FOR CANDIDATES FOR COUNTY OFFICE;
TO AMEND PORTIONS OF INITIATED ACT 1 OF 1996; AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO INCREASE TRANSPARENCY REGARDING
CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS AND EXPENDITURES;
TO AMEND CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORTING AND
PROTECT ELECTION INTEGRITY; AND TO AMEND
PORTIONS OF INITIATED ACT 1 OF 1996.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 7-6-208(a), concerning reports of contributions for candidates for school district, township, or municipal office and resulting from Initiated Act 1 of 1996, is amended to read as follows:

(a)(1) Reports required. Except as provided in subsection (d) of this section, each candidate for school district, township, or municipal office, or a person acting in the candidate's behalf, shall file with the Secretary of State in an election year for the office that the candidate is seeking:

~~(1)(A) For each year in which a candidate is not listed on a ballot for election, file an annual report of all contributions received and~~



~~expenditures made during that year.~~

~~(B) The annual report shall be filed no later than fifteen (15) days after the end of the year;~~

~~(2) No later than seven (7) days prior to any preferential primary election, runoff election, general election, school election, or special election in which the candidate's name appears on the ballot, file a preelection report of all contributions received and expenditures made between the period covered by the previous report, if any, and the period ten (10) days before the election. In case of a runoff election, the report shall cover all contributions received and expenditures made during that period of time that begins after the date of the election from which the runoff arose and ends ten (10) days before the runoff election;~~

~~(3) No later than thirty (30) days after the end of the month in which the candidate's name has appeared on the ballot in any preferential primary election, runoff election, general election, school election, or special election, or when only one (1) candidate qualifies for a particular office or position and no position or name of an unopposed candidate shall appear on a ballot, file a final report of all contributions received and expenditures made that have not been disclosed on reports previously required to be filed. A final report is required regardless of whether a candidate has received contributions or made expenditures in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500);~~

~~(4) File supplemental reports of all contributions received and expenditures made after the date of preparation of the final report. The supplemental reports shall be filed within thirty (30) days after the receipt of a contribution or the making of an expenditure;~~

~~(5)(A) No later than thirty (30) days after the end of the month in which the candidate has withdrawn, file a final report of all contributions received and expenditures made that have not been disclosed on reports previously required to be filed.~~

~~(B) If a candidate withdraws from the campaign, the candidate shall notify the county clerk in writing of the withdrawal; and~~

~~(6) If a candidate keeps remaining campaign funds after an election, the candidate shall continue filing the reports required by this subsection (A)(i) A monthly report of all contributions received and expenditures made during each month beginning with the month of January of a~~

calendar year in which a candidate may be listed on a ballot for election.

(ii) A monthly report shall not be due under this subdivision (a)(1)(A) for a month in which certain days of that month are included in a preelection report required under subdivision (a)(1)(B) of this section or a final report required under subdivision (a)(1)(C) of this section.

(iii) In the case of a primary or runoff election, those days of the month occurring after the date of the election shall be carried forward and included in the next monthly report required under this subdivision (a)(1)(A).

(iv) The monthly report shall be filed no later than twenty (20) days after the end of each month, except that the final report shall be filed as required in subdivision (a)(1)(C)(i) of this section;

(B)(i) No later than seven (7) days before a preferential primary election, runoff election, general election, school election, or special election in which the candidate's name appears on the ballot, a preelection report of all contributions received and expenditures made between the period covered by the previous report and the period ten (10) days before the election.

(ii) In case of a runoff election, the preelection report required under this subdivision (a)(1)(B) shall cover all contributions received and expenditures made during that period of time that begins after the date of the election from which the runoff arose and ends ten (10) days before the runoff election;

(C)(i) A final report of all contributions received and expenditures made for that election that have not been disclosed on reports previously required to be filed no later than twenty (20) days after the end of the month following the month in which the candidate's name has appeared on the ballot in a primary election, runoff election, general election, school election, or special election or when only one (1) candidate qualifies for a particular office or position and no position or name of an unopposed candidate shall appear on a ballot.

(ii) A final report is required under this subdivision (a)(1)(C) whether or not a candidate has received contributions or made expenditures in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500); and

(D)(i) A final report of all contributions received and

expenditures made that have not been disclosed on reports previously required to be filed.

(ii) The final report under this subdivision (a)(1)(D) shall be filed no later than thirty (30) days after the end of the month in which the candidate has withdrawn.

(iii) If a candidate withdraws from the campaign, the candidate shall notify the Secretary of State in writing of the withdrawal.

(2)(A) A candidate shall not be required to file a fourth quarter report under this subsection if the candidate keeps remaining campaign funds after an election but does not have any activity before the end of the year.

(B) A candidate shall continue filing the reports required by this subsection if the candidate keeps remaining campaign funds and raises campaign funds for a future campaign or expends campaign funds for office holder expenses or a future election.

(3) Except as provided in subsection (d) of this section, in a year for which there is no election for the office that the candidate is seeking, each candidate for school district, township, or municipal office, or a person acting in the candidate's behalf, shall file with the Secretary of State no later than December 31 an annual report of all contributions received and expenditures made for the year.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 7-6-208(d), concerning reports of contributions not required for candidates for school district, township, or municipal office and resulting from Initiated Act 1 of 1996, is amended to read as follows:

(d) Reports Not Required.

(1) A candidate who has not received contributions or made expenditures in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500) shall not be required to file any preelection reports required under ~~subdivision (a)(1)~~ subsection (a) of this section.

(2) A candidate who has received contributions or made expenditures in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500) but not exceeding five thousand dollars (\$5,000) shall only file:

(A) A preelection report required under subdivision

(a)(1)(B) of this section; and

(B) A final report required under subdivision (a)(1)(C) of this section.

(3) In calculating the amount of contributions received or expenditures made for purposes of this exception, the payment of the filing fee from the candidate's personal funds shall not be considered as either a contribution or an expenditure.

~~(2)(4)~~ The preelection reports referenced in ~~subdivision (a)(1)~~ subsection (a) of this section are required only for candidates with opponents in those elections.

SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 7-6-209(a), concerning reports of contributions for candidates for county office and resulting from Initiated Act 1 of 1996, is amended to read as follows:

(a)(1) Reports Required. Except as provided in subsection (d) of this section, each candidate for county office or a person acting in the candidate's behalf shall file with the Secretary of State in an election year for the office that the candidate is seeking:

~~(1)(A) For each year in which a candidate is not listed on a ballot for election, file an annual report of all contributions received and expenditures made during that year.~~

~~(B) The annual report shall be filed no later than fifteen (15) days after the end of the year;~~

~~(2) No later than seven (7) days prior to any preferential primary election, runoff election, general election, or special election in which the candidate's name appears on the ballot, file a preelection report of all contributions received and expenditures made between the period covered by the previous report, if any, and the period ten (10) days before the election. In case of a runoff election, the report shall cover all contributions received and expenditures made during that period of time that begins after the date of the election from which the runoff arose and ends ten (10) days before the runoff election;~~

~~(3) No later than thirty (30) days after the end of the month in which the candidate's name has appeared on the ballot in any preferential primary election, runoff election, general election, or special election, or when only one (1) candidate qualifies for a particular office or position and~~

~~no position or name of an unopposed candidate shall appear on a ballot, file a final report of all contributions received and expenditures made that have not been disclosed on reports previously required to be filed. A final report is required regardless of whether a candidate has received contributions or made expenditures in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500);~~

~~(4) File supplemental reports of all contributions received and expenditures made after the date of preparation of the final report, and the supplemental reports shall be filed within thirty (30) days after the receipt of a contribution or the making of an expenditure;~~

~~(5)(A) No later than thirty (30) days after the end of the month in which the candidate has withdrawn, a final report of all contributions received and expenditures made that have not been disclosed on reports previously required to be filed.~~

~~(B) If a candidate withdraws from the campaign, the candidate shall notify the county clerk in writing of the withdrawal; and~~

~~(6) If a candidate keeps remaining campaign funds after an election, the candidate shall continue filing the reports required by this subsection (A)(i) A monthly report of all contributions received and expenditures made during each month beginning with the month of January of a calendar year in which a candidate may be listed on a ballot for election.~~

~~(ii) A monthly report shall not be due under this subdivision (a)(1)(A) for a month in which certain days of that month are included in a preelection report required under subdivision (a)(1)(B) of this section or a final report required under subdivision (a)(1)(C) of this section.~~

~~(iii) In the case of a primary or runoff election, those days of the month occurring after the date of the election shall be carried forward and included in the next monthly report required under this subdivision (a)(1)(A).~~

~~(iv) The monthly report shall be filed no later than twenty (20) days after the end of each month, except that the final report shall be filed as required in subdivision (a)(1)(C)(i) of this section; campaign contributions or expenditures exceed five hundred dollars (\$500);~~

~~(B)(i) No later than seven (7) days before a preferential primary election, runoff election, general election, or special election in which the candidate's name appears on the ballot, a preelection report of all~~

contributions received and expenditures made between the period covered by the previous report and the period ten (10) days before the election.

(ii) In case of a runoff election, the preelection report required under this subdivision (a)(1)(B) shall cover all contributions received and expenditures made during that period of time that begins after the date of the election from which the runoff arose and ends ten (10) days before the runoff election;

(C)(i) A final report of all contributions received and expenditures made for that election that have not been disclosed on reports previously required to be filed no later than twenty (20) days after the end of the month following the month in which the candidate's name has appeared on the ballot in a primary election, runoff election, general election, or special election or when only one (1) candidate qualifies for a particular office or position and no position or name of an unopposed candidate shall appear on a ballot.

(ii) A final report is required under this subdivision (a)(1)(C) whether or not a candidate has received contributions or made expenditures in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500); and

(D)(i) A final report of all contributions received and expenditures made that have not been disclosed on reports previously required to be filed.

(ii) The final report under this subdivision (a)(1)(D) shall be filed no later than thirty (30) days after the end of the month in which the candidate has withdrawn.

(iii) If a candidate withdraws from the campaign, the candidate shall notify the Secretary of State in writing of the withdrawal.

(2)(A) A candidate shall not be required to file a fourth quarter report under this subsection if the candidate keeps remaining campaign funds after an election but does not have any activity before the end of the year.

(B) A candidate shall continue filing the reports required by this subsection if the candidate keeps remaining campaign funds and raises campaign funds for a future campaign or expends campaign funds for office holder expenses or a future election.

(3) Except as provided in subsection (d) of this section, in a

year for which there is no election for the office that the candidate is seeking, each candidate for county office, or a person acting in the candidate's behalf, shall file with the Secretary of State not later than December 31 an annual report of all contributions received and expenditures made for the year.

SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 7-6-209(d), concerning reports of contributions not required for candidates for county office and resulting from Initiated Act 1 of 1996, is amended to read as follows:

(d) Reports Not Required.

(1) A candidate who has not received contributions or made expenditures in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500) shall not be required to file any preelection reports required under ~~subdivision (a)(1)~~ subsection (a) of this section.

(2) A candidate who has received contributions or made expenditures in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500) but not exceeding five thousand dollars (\$5,000) shall only file:

(A) A preelection report required under subdivision (a)(1)(B) of this section; and

(B) A final report required under subdivision (a)(1)(C) of this section.

(3) In calculating the amount of contributions received or expenditures made for purposes of this exception, the payment of the filing fee from the candidate's personal funds shall not be considered as either a contribution or an expenditure.

~~(2)(4)~~ (4) The preelection reports referenced in ~~subdivision (a)(1)~~ subsection (a) of this section are required only for candidates with opponents in those elections.

/s/Underwood