

AN ACT

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*Codification  
District of  
Columbia  
Official Code*

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IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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To require all exploratory committees to file informational reports with the Office of Campaign Finance, to establish individual and aggregate contribution limits, to treat exploratory contributions as campaign contributions, and to establish a time limit for the operation of an exploratory committee; and to amend the District of Columbia Campaign Finance Reform and Conflict of Interest Act to clarify when an individual shall be deemed a candidate.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Exploratory Committee Regulation Amendment Act of 2007”.

Sec. 2. Definitions.

For the purposes of this act, the term “exploratory committee” means any individual, or group of individuals, organized for the purpose of examining or exploring the feasibility of becoming a candidate for an elective office in the District of Columbia.

Sec. 3. Reports of exploratory committees.

(a) Each exploratory committee shall file an informational report with the Office of Campaign Finance that lists the following:

- (1) Each contributor’s full name and the contribution received by the committee;
- (2) Itemized expenditures by category, including polling, travel, office rent, and administrative costs; and
- (3) The balance of the exploratory committee fund.

(b)(1) The informational report shall be filed semiannually, on January 31<sup>st</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup>; provided, that within 12 months of an election for the office that is the subject of the exploratory committee, reports shall be filed on the last day of each month.

(2) A final informational report shall be filed within 30 days of the termination of an exploratory committee.

**Sec. 4. Fund balance requirements.**

(a) Any balance in the exploratory committee fund shall only be transferred to an established principal campaign committee, political committee, or charitable organization in accordance with D.C. Official Code § 47-1803.03(a)(8).

(b) Exploratory committee fund balances shall not be deemed the personal funds of any individual, including the individual seeking elective office.

**Sec. 5. Aggregate and individual contribution limits.**

(a) Exploratory committees shall not receive aggregate contributions in excess of:

- (1) \$200,000 for a Mayoral exploratory committee;
- (2) \$150,000 for a Chairman of the Council exploratory committee;
- (3) \$100,000 for an at-large member of the Council exploratory committee;
- (4) \$50,000 for a Ward Councilmember or President of the State Board of

Education exploratory committee; and

(5) \$20,000 for a member of the State Board of Education exploratory committee.

(b) Exploratory committees shall not receive individual contributions in excess of:

- (1) \$2,000 for a Mayoral exploratory committee;
- (2) \$1,500 for a Chairman of the Council exploratory committee;
- (3) \$1,000 for an at-large member of the Council exploratory committee;
- (4) \$500 for a Ward Councilmember or President of the State Board of

Education exploratory committee; and

(5) \$200 for a member of the State Board of Education exploratory committee.

**Sec. 6. Contribution prohibition.**

When an individual decides to run for office and becomes a candidate, contributions received during the exploratory period shall apply to the campaign contribution limits for the candidate as provided under section 3 of the District of Columbia Campaign Contribution Limitation Initiative of 1992, effective March 17, 1993 (D.C. Law 9-204; D.C. Official Code § 1-1131.01).

**Sec. 7. Time limit for the operation of an exploratory committee.**

The duration of an exploratory committee shall not exceed 18 months for any one office. Once a candidate's exploratory committee reaches the maximum duration of 18 months, the candidate shall file a declaration of candidacy and form a principal political campaign committee or terminate the exploratory committee.

**ENROLLED ORIGINAL**

Sec. 8. Section 102 (2)(C) of the District of Columbia Campaign Finance Reform and Conflict of Interest Act, approved August 14, 1974 (88 Stat. 447; D.C. Official Code § 1-1101.01(2)(C)), is amended by striking the phrase “for that purpose.” and inserting the phrase “for that purpose; provided, that an individual shall not be deemed a candidate if he notifies each person who has received contributions or made expenditures that such individual is only testing the waters, has not yet made any decision whether to seek nomination or election to public office, and is not a candidate.” in its place.

Amend  
§ 1-1101.01

Sec. 9. Fiscal impact statement.

The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal impact statement required by section 602(c)(3) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(3)).

Sec. 10. Effective date.

This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of Congressional review as provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of Columbia Register.

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Chairman  
Council of the District of Columbia

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Mayor  
District of Columbia