

1 S.243

2 Introduced by Senator Galbraith

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Elections; campaign finance; limitations of contributions; single
6 sources, businesses, and partnerships

7 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require that a
8 campaign contribution made by a business or partnership be attributed pro rata
9 between the business or partnership and a single source that owns more than 50
10 percent of that business or partnership or between the business or partnership
11 and a single source with any ownership interest that also had the exclusive
12 signature authority to make the contribution on behalf of the business
13 or partnership.

14 An act relating to limiting the campaign contributions of businesses and
15 partnerships

16 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

17 Sec. 1. FINDINGS

18 The General Assembly finds that:

19 (1) Statutory limits on the amount of money that may be contributed to a
20 candidate for public office are intended to prevent the improper influence that

1 any individual, corporation, or other entity might have on a candidate or
2 elected official in order to preserve the integrity of elections in Vermont.

3 (2) Vermont law currently allows individuals and corporations to evade
4 statutory limits on campaign contributions by making such contributions
5 themselves and from corporations, partnerships, single proprietorships, and
6 other entities that are owned or controlled by the individual or corporation. A
7 review of campaign finance reports filed with the Secretary of State indicates
8 that some individuals do contribute to preferred candidates both individually
9 and from the businesses that they control so that the sum of the contributions
10 from assets owned by the individual exceeds the statutory limits
11 on contributions.

12 (3) The definition of “single source” in Vermont’s campaign finance
13 law and the lack of restrictions on what entities may make a political
14 contribution makes it easy for individuals and corporations to establish
15 businesses or other entities that can make political contributions in their
16 own right.

17 (4) In order to have meaningful limits on campaign contributions,
18 Vermont must prohibit individuals and corporations from contributing amounts
19 in excess of statutory limits to candidates, political committees, and parties
20 both from themselves and from corporations, partnerships, and businesses and
21 other entities that they control.

