

1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Government Operations to which was referred Senate
3 Bill No. 51 entitled “An act relating to persons authorized to make
4 contributions to candidates and political parties and to political committee
5 names” respectfully reports that it has considered the same and recommends
6 that the bill be amended by striking out Sec. 4, effective dates, in its entirety
7 and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

8 Sec. 4. PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FINANCE STUDY COMMITTEE; REPORT

9 (a) Creation. There is created the Public Campaign Finance Study
10 Committee to study and make recommendations regarding Vermont’s current
11 public campaign finance option.

12 (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following
13 members:

14 (1) one current member of the Senate, who shall be appointed by the
15 Committee on Committees and who shall be Co-Chair;

16 (2) one current member of the House of Representatives, who shall be
17 appointed by the Speaker of the House and who shall be Co-Chair;

18 (3) the Secretary of State or designee;

19 (4) the Attorney General or designee; and

20 (5) the Executive Director of the State Ethics Commission or designee.

1 (c) Powers and duties. The Committee shall consult with interested
2 stakeholders to study and make recommendations on Vermont’s current public
3 campaign finance option (Option), including the following issues:

4 (1) whether the structure of the Option is appropriate or whether
5 Vermont should instead enact a different public campaign finance system, such
6 as one based on vouchers as in the Seattle Democracy Voucher Program or one
7 that provides supplemental payments based on the amount of qualifying
8 contributions as in the Maine Clean Election Act;

9 (2) if Vermont should retain the Option:

10 (A) whether the current qualifying contributions and grant amounts
11 for candidates for Governor and Lieutenant Governor are appropriate;

12 (B) whether the Option should be extended to other offices and, if so,
13 which offices and what the qualifying contributions and grant amounts should
14 be for each office; and

15 (C) how it may be improved; and

16 (3) what the funding source should be for either the Option or any
17 recommended substitute.

18 (d) Assistance. The Committee shall have the assistance of the Office of
19 Legislative Counsel and the Joint Fiscal Office.

20 (e) Report. On or before December 1, 2021, the Committee shall report to
21 the Senate and House Committees on Government Operations with its findings

1 and any recommendations for legislative action. The report may be in the form
2 of legislation.

3 (f) Meetings.

4 (1) The Co-Chairs shall call the first meeting of the Committee to occur
5 on or before August 15, 2021.

6 (2) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

7 (3) The Committee shall cease to exist on December 1, 2021.

8 (g) Compensation and reimbursement.

9 (1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General
10 Assembly, a legislative member of the Committee shall be entitled to per diem
11 compensation and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 406 for
12 not more than five meetings. These payments shall be made from monies
13 appropriated to the General Assembly.

14 (2) Other members of the Committee shall be entitled to per diem
15 compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A.
16 § 1010 for not more than five meetings. These payments shall be made from
17 monies appropriated to the member's appointing authority.

18 Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATES

19 This act shall take effect on December 11, 2022, except that Sec. 4
20 (campaign finance study) shall take effect upon passage.

1 (Committee vote: _____)

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Senator _____

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FOR THE COMMITTEE