



Using Campaign Funds for Candidate Security

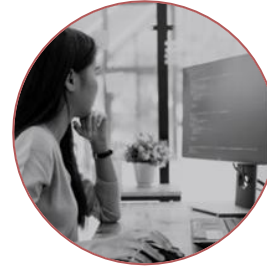
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National Conference of State Legislatures

House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs
Vermont House of Representatives
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Today's Agenda

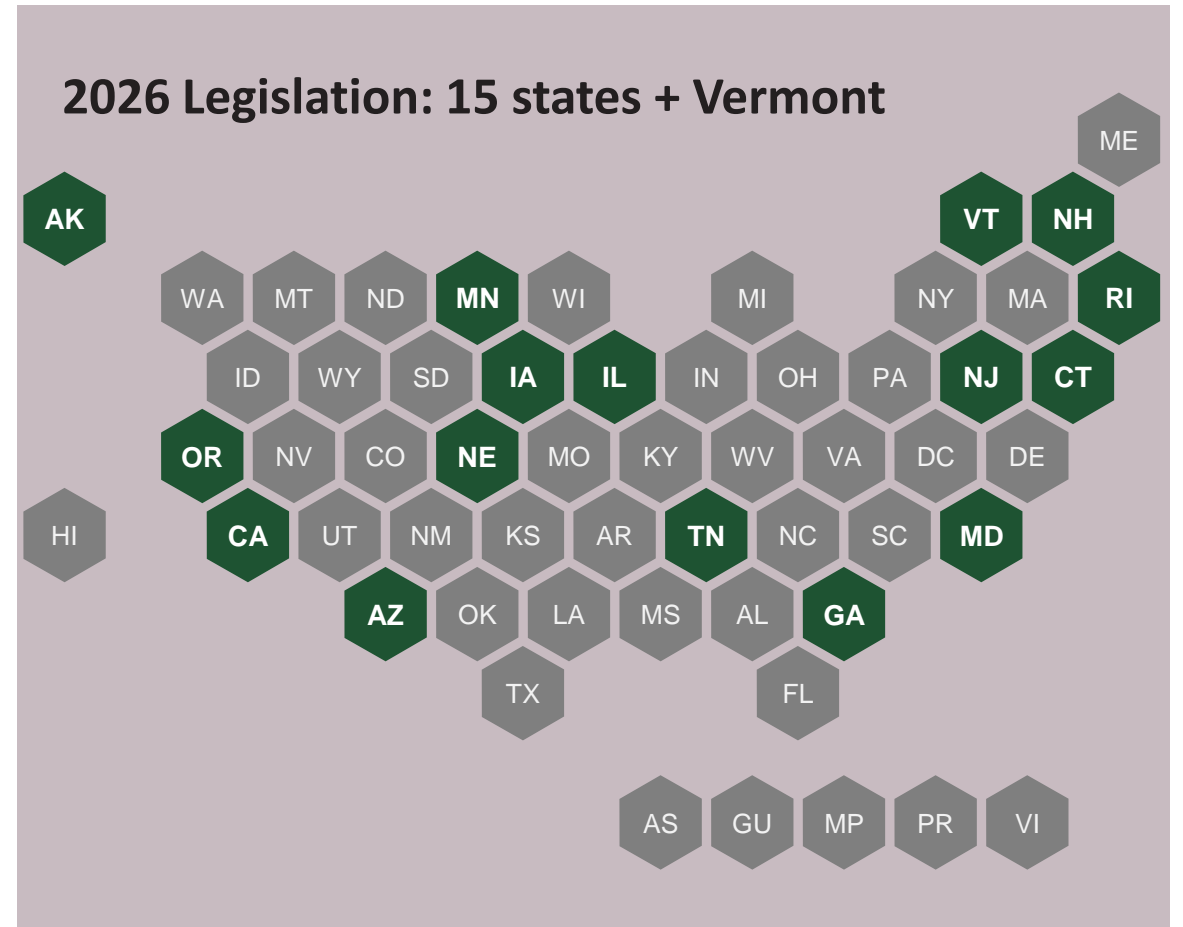
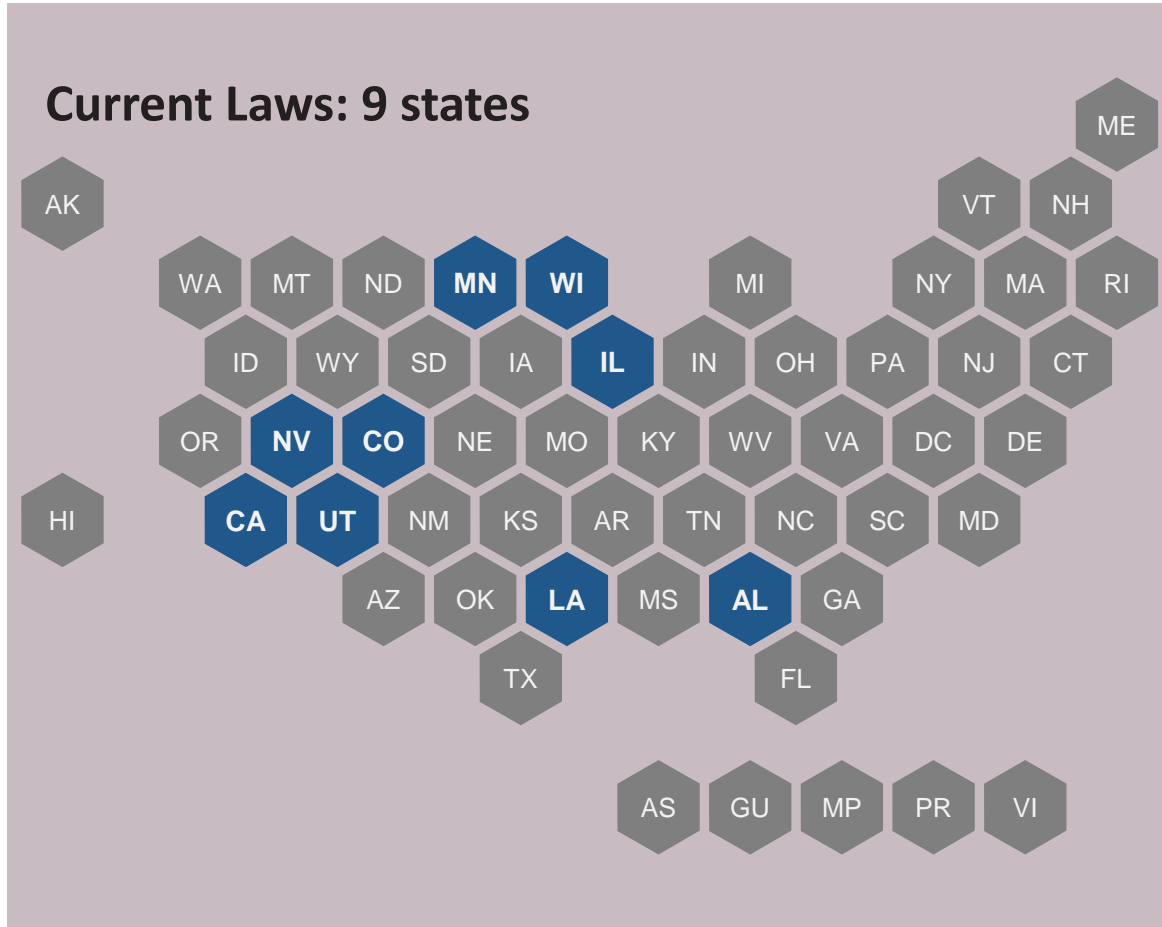
- Current Laws & 2026 Bills
- Covered Security Expenses
- Implementation & Drafting Considerations

Campaign Funds for Candidate Security: Legislative Approaches



- **Security expenses exempt from prohibitions on “personal use” of campaign funds.**
 - Does the expense **arise out of the fact that the candidate is running a campaign** for office?
 - Yes: Likely a **permissible expense**. Not a personal use.
 - Would the expense **exist even if the candidate were not campaigning?**
 - Yes: Likely a **prohibited personal use**.
- **Affirmative authorization of security expenses.**
- **Advisory opinions and regulations.**
- **Campaign finance disclosure requirements.**

The Current Landscape



Campaign Security Expenses: Who Is Covered?



The Candidate

- Some states specify where and when candidate security is available.
 - At campaign events?
 - At home?
 - At campaign office?
 - At non-legislative office?



The Candidate's Family

- Most states specifically mention security expenditures for a candidate's family.



Campaign Staff

- 10 states specifically mention security expenditures for campaign staff.

Campaign Security Expenses: What is Covered?



Federal Election Commission regulations:

- Federal candidates may use campaign funds for security for themselves, family and staff.
- Expenses may include personnel, hardware and software.

Personnel

8 states specifically mention security personnel expenses.

Devices & Installation

14 states specifically mention hardware expenses.

- Cameras.
- Enhanced locks.
- Fencing.

Monitoring

16 states specifically mention security monitoring system expenses.

- Motion detection.
- Alarm systems.

Cybersecurity

7 states specifically mention cybersecurity expenses.

- Cybersecurity software.
- Identity and credit monitoring.
- PII removal services.

Firearms

6 laws or bills prohibit firearm expenses.

- Cal., Ga., Md., N.J., R.I., Utah
- Okla.: Ethics opinion

Iowa bill would permit firearm expenses.

- Firearms training.

Campaign Security Expenses: Considerations

When are security expenses necessary?

- Law enforcement threat verification.
 - Cal., Md.
 - R.I.: bill specifies verification would not be required.
- Prohibitions on installing security systems for home improvement.
 - Ala., Ga., N.J., R.I.

Who can provide services?

- Prohibitions on paying family members or close connections for services.

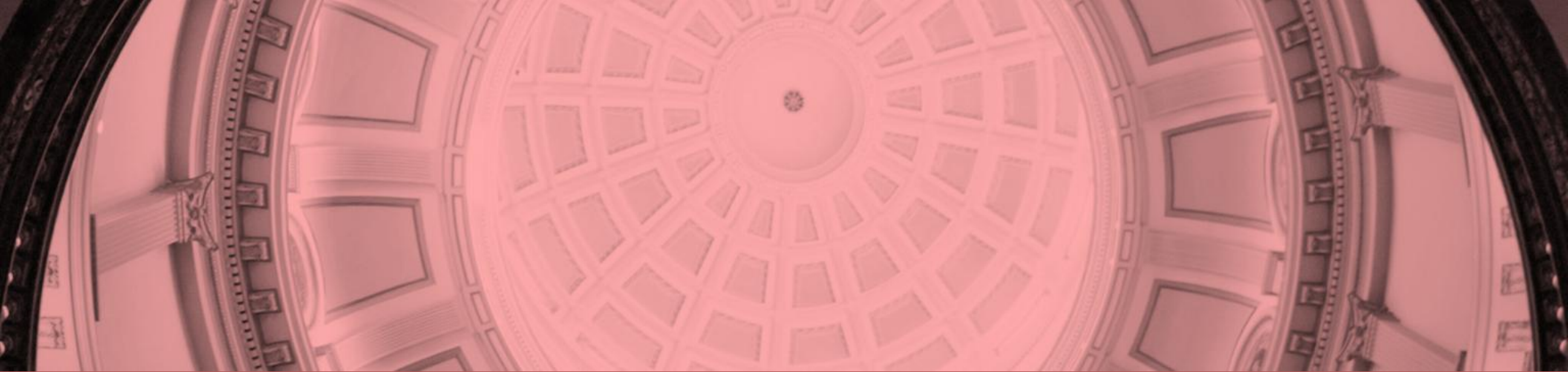
How much can candidates spend on security?

- \$1,000 - \$3,000: Iowa, Md., Minn., N.H.
 - Iowa: \$3,000 for installation. \$1,200 per year for operation.
 - Md.: \$10,000 lifetime cap.
- \$10,000-\$12,000: Cal., N.J., R.I., Tenn.

Campaign Security Expenses: Considerations, cont.

What happens to extra campaign funds and purchased security equipment when a campaign is over?

- **Security expense legislation that applies to candidates and officeholders: 8 states.**
- **Authorizing continued use of security services purchased during campaign for officeholders.**
 - Cal., Ga.
- **Exempt security services purchased during campaign from campaign liquidation.**
 - Ala., Ore., Tenn.
 - Tenn.: Use of surplus campaign funds for officeholder security.
- **Include security services purchased during campaign in campaign liquidation.**
 - Cal., Ga., Md., N.J.
 - After leaving office.
 - Md.: After threat subsides.



Thank you for having me today!

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