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HOUSE BILL NO. 86

Offered January 12, 2022

Prefiled January 5, 2022

A BILL to amend and reenact § 24.2-946.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to elections; campaign finance; disclosure reports; searchable electronic database.

Patrons—Anderson, Bulova, Convirs-Fowler, Kory, Bennett-Parker, Clark, Helmer, Hudson, Keam, Kilgore, McGuire, Rasoul, Roem, Runion, Scott, P.A., Subramanyam, Taylor, Wachsmann and Williams; Senators: Chase, Favola, Morrissey and Ruff

Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 24.2-946.1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 24.2-946.1. Standards and requirements for electronic preparation and transmittal of campaign finance disclosure reports; database.

A. The State Board shall review or cause to be developed and shall approve standards for the preparation, production, and transmittal by computer or electronic means of campaign finance reports required by this chapter. The State Board may prescribe the method of execution and certification of and the procedures for receiving electronically filed campaign finance reports required by this chapter in the office of the State Board or any local electoral board. The State Board may provide campaign finance report-creation software to filers without charge or at a reasonable cost.

B. The State Board shall accept any campaign finance report filed by candidates for the General Assembly and statewide office by computer or electronic means in accordance with the standards approved by the Board and using software meeting standards approved by it. This information shall be made available to the public promptly by the Board through the Internet.

C. The State Board of Elections shall develop and implement a centralized system to accept reports from candidates for local and constitutional offices. Such reports shall be filed in accordance with, and using software that meets, standards approved by the State Board. The State Board shall promptly notify the general registrar of the locality in which a candidate resides and make the information contained in the report available to the general registrar. In the case of a former candidate who is no longer seeking election but has not yet filed a final report as required by § 24.2-948.4, the State Board shall promptly notify the general registrar of the locality in which he sought office and make the information contained in the report available to such general registrar.

D. The State Board shall enter or cause to be entered into a campaign finance database, available to the public through the Internet, the information from required campaign finance reports filed by computer, electronic, or other means by candidates for the General Assembly and statewide office. *The database shall have an interface that allows users to easily search for and sort information by individual candidates and types of elections, offices, committees, and donors; donations, expenditures, loans, and other categories of information included in campaign finance reports; and late filings, incomplete filings, and other violations. The interface shall also provide users tools for manipulating and exporting data.*

E. Other campaign finance reports required by this chapter to be filed by a committee with the State Board or a general registrar, or both, may be filed electronically on terms agreed to by the committee and the Board.

2. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on July 1, 2023.

INTRODUCED

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