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SENATE BILL NO. 584

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 14, 2026

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 24.2-945.1 and 24.2-946.1 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Article 1 of Chapter 9.3 of Title 24.2 sections numbered 24.2-945.3 and 24.2-945.4, by adding in Chapter 9.3 of Title 24.2 an article numbered 3.1, consisting of sections numbered 24.2-948.10 through 24.2-948.15, and by adding in Article 8 of Chapter 9.3 of Title 24.2 a section numbered 24.2-953.7, relating to campaign finance; contribution limits; penalties.

Patrons—Salim and Deeds

Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 24.2-945.1 and 24.2-946.1 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Article 1 of Chapter 9.3 of Title 24.2 sections numbered 24.2-945.3 and 24.2-945.4, by adding in Chapter 9.3 of Title 24.2 an article numbered 3.1, consisting of sections numbered 24.2-948.10 through 24.2-948.15, and by adding in Article 8 of Chapter 9.3 of Title 24.2 a section numbered 24.2-953.7 as follows:

§ 24.2-945.1. Definitions.

A. As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Authorization" means express approval or express consent by the candidate, the candidate's campaign committee, or an agent of the candidate or his campaign committee after coordination.

"Campaign committee" means the committee designated by a candidate to receive all contributions and make all expenditures for him or on his behalf in connection with his nomination or election.

"Candidate" means "candidate" as defined in § 24.2-101.

"Contribution" means money and services of any amount, in-kind contributions, and any other thing of value, given, advanced, loaned, or in any other way provided to a candidate, campaign committee, political committee, or person for the purpose of expressly advocating the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate or to an inaugural committee for the purpose of defraying the costs of the inauguration of a Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or Attorney General. "Contribution" includes money, services, or things of value in any way provided by a candidate to his own campaign and the payment by the candidate of a filing fee for any party nomination method.

"Coordinated" or "coordination" refers to an expenditure that is made (i) at the express request or suggestion of a candidate, a candidate's campaign committee, or an agent of the candidate or his campaign committee or (ii) with material involvement of the candidate, a candidate's campaign committee, or an agent of the candidate or his campaign committee in devising the strategy, content, means of dissemination, or timing of the expenditure.

"Designated contribution" means a contribution that is designated specifically and in writing for a particular candidate or candidates and that is made using a political committee solely as a conduit.

"Expenditure" means money and services of any amount, and any other thing of value, paid, loaned, provided, or in any other way disbursed by any candidate, campaign committee, political committee, or person for the purpose of expressly advocating the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate or by any inaugural committee for the purpose of defraying the costs of the inauguration of a Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or Attorney General.

"Federal political action committee" means any political action committee registered with the Federal Election Commission that makes contributions to candidates or political committees registered in Virginia.

"Inaugural committee" means any organization, person, or group of persons that anticipates receiving contributions or making expenditures, from other than publicly appropriated funds, for the inauguration of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or Attorney General and related activities.

"Independent expenditure" means an expenditure made by any person, candidate campaign committee, or political committee that is not made to, controlled by, coordinated with, or made with the authorization of a candidate, his campaign committee, or an agent of the candidate or his campaign committee. "Independent expenditure" includes an expenditure made by a candidate campaign committee (i) that is not related to the candidate's own campaign and (ii) that is not made to, controlled by, coordinated with, or made with the authorization of a different candidate, his campaign committee, or an agent of that candidate or his campaign committee.

"In-kind contribution" means the donation of goods, services, property, or other thing of value, other than money, including an expenditure controlled by, coordinated with, or made upon the authorization of a

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candidate, his campaign committee, or an agent of the candidate or his campaign committee, that is provided for free or less than the usual and normal charge. The basis for arriving at the dollar value of an in-kind contribution is as follows: new items are valued at retail value; used items are valued at fair market value; and services rendered are valued at the actual cost of service per hour. Services shall not be deemed to include personal services voluntarily rendered for which no compensation is asked or given.

"Out-of-state political committee" means an entity covered by § 527 of the United States Internal Revenue Code that is not registered as a political committee or candidate campaign committee in Virginia and that does not have as its primary purpose expressly advocating the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate. The term shall not include a federal political action committee.

"Person" means any individual or corporation, partnership, business, labor organization, membership organization, association, cooperative, or other like entity.

"Political action committee" means any organization, person, or group of persons, established or maintained to receive and expend contributions for the primary purpose of expressly advocating the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate. The term shall not include a campaign committee, federal political action committee, out-of-state political committee, political party committee, referendum committee, or inaugural committee.

"Political committee" means and includes any political action committee, political party committee, referendum committee, or inaugural committee. The term shall not include: (i) a federal political action committee or out-of-state political committee; (ii) a campaign committee; (iii) a political party committee exempted pursuant to § 24.2-950.1; or (iv) a person who receives no contributions from any source and whose only expenditures are made solely from his own funds and are either contributions made by him which are reportable by the recipient pursuant to this chapter or independent expenditures which are reportable by him to the extent required by § 24.2-945.2, or a combination of such reportable contributions and independent expenditures.

"Political party committee" means any state political party committee, congressional district political party committee, county or city political party committee, other election district political party committee, or organized political party group of elected officials. This definition is subject to the provisions of § 24.2-950.1.

"Primary purpose" means that 50% or more of the committee's expenditures made in the form of contributions shall be made to candidate campaign committees or political committees registered in Virginia. Administrative expenditures and the transfer of funds between affiliated or connected organizations shall not be considered in determining the committee's primary purpose. The primary purpose of the committee shall not be determined on the basis of only one report or election cycle, but over the entirety of the committee's registration.

"Referendum committee" means any organization, person, group of persons, or committee, that makes expenditures in a calendar year in excess of (i) \$10,000 to advocate the passage or defeat of a statewide referendum, (ii) \$5,000 to advocate the passage or defeat of a referendum being held in two or more counties and cities, or (iii) \$1,000 to advocate the passage or defeat of a referendum held in a single county or city.

"Residence" means "residence" or "resident" as defined in § 24.2-101.

"Statewide office" means the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or Attorney General.

B. For the purpose of applying the filing and reporting requirements of this chapter, the terms "person" and "political committee," shall not include an organization holding tax-exempt status under § 501(c) (3), 501(c) (4), or 501(c) (6) of the United States Internal Revenue Code which, in providing information to voters, does not advocate or endorse the election or defeat of a particular candidate, group of candidates, or the candidates of a particular political party. *The terms "person" and "political committee," shall apply to such organizations for the purposes of the limits on contributions provided in Article 3.1.*

§ 24.2-945.3. Prohibited contributions from foreign nationals.

A. *For the purposes of this section the term "foreign national" means (i) an individual who is (a) not a citizen of the United States and (b) not lawfully admitted for permanent residence; (ii) a foreign government; (iii) a foreign political party; or (iv) a partnership, association, corporation, organization, or other combination of persons organized under the laws of a foreign country or whose principal place of business is in a foreign country.*

B. *A foreign national shall not, directly or indirectly, make any contribution or expenditure, or expressly or impliedly promise to provide anything of value, in connection with any ballot measure.*

§ 24.2-945.4. Prohibited contributions from foreign-influenced corporations; required disclosure; penalties.

A. *As used in this section:*

"Chief executive officer" means the highest-ranking officer or decision-making individual with authority over a corporation's affairs.

"Corporation" means a corporation, partnership, business, labor organization, membership organization, association, cooperative, or other like entity.

"Foreign-influenced corporation" means a corporation for which at least one of the following conditions

is met:

1. A single foreign owner holds, owns, controls, or otherwise has direct or indirect beneficial ownership of one percent or more of the total equity, outstanding voting shares, membership units, or other applicable ownership interests of the corporation;

2. Two or more foreign owners, in aggregate, hold, own, control, or otherwise have direct or indirect beneficial ownership of five percent or more of the total equity, outstanding voting shares, membership units, or other applicable ownership interests of the corporation; or

3. A single foreign owner participates directly or indirectly in the corporation's decision-making process with respect to the corporation's political activities in the United States.

"Foreign investor" means a person that (i) holds, owns, controls, or otherwise has direct or indirect beneficial ownership of equity, outstanding voting shares, membership units, or other applicable ownership interests of a corporation and (ii) is a government of a foreign country, or a foreign political party, or a corporation organized under the laws of or having its principal place of business in a foreign country, or an individual who is not a citizen of the United States or a national of the United States and who is not lawfully admitted for permanent residence.

"Foreign owner" means (i) a foreign investor or (ii) a corporation wherein a foreign investor holds, owns, controls, or otherwise has directly or indirectly acquired a beneficial ownership of equity or voting shares in an amount that is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the total equity or outstanding voting shares of the corporation.

B. No foreign-influenced corporation shall make (i) an expenditure in connection with any ballot measure; (ii) an independent expenditure; or (iii) a contribution to a candidate, campaign committee, or political committee.

Any such corporation violating this chapter shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$50,000, and any officer, director, or agent of any such corporation violating any provision of this chapter or authorizing such violation of any provision thereof, or any person that violates or in any way knowingly aids or abets the violation thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000, imprisonment for not more than one year, or both.

C. Any corporation that makes an independent expenditure or makes a contribution to a candidate, campaign committee, political committee, or political party committee shall within seven days after making such expenditure or contribution file with the Department a statement of certification, signed by the chief executive officer under penalty of perjury, avowing that, after due inquiry, the corporation was not a foreign-influenced corporation on the date such expenditure or contribution was made. The corporation shall provide a copy of the statement of certification to any candidate, campaign committee, or political committee to which it makes any contribution.

D. No candidate, campaign committee, or political committee shall solicit or accept contributions from any corporation that fails to file a statement of certification pursuant to subsection C. Any contribution that is returned in full to the contributor within 10 days after receipt shall not be deemed to have been accepted for the purposes of applying the prohibition set forth in this section.

§ 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, other spenders, and contributors; contributions, receipts, disbursements, 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 with 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.

Article 3.1.

Contribution Limits.

§ 24.2-948.10. Definition; political committees.

For the purposes of this article, the term "political committee" includes, notwithstanding the definition of "political committee" in § 24.2-945.1 and the exemptions in § 24.2-950.1, any local district, county, or city party committee regardless of the population of such district, county, or city or the amount of contributions accepted or expenditures made.

§ 24.2-948.11. Limits on contributions to campaign committees.

A. No person, campaign committee, political action committee, out-of-state political action committee, federal political action committee, or political party committee shall make any single contribution, or any combination of contributions, that exceeds the candidate contribution cap to any one candidate for elected office for any election. The candidate contribution cap shall be the base year amount of (i) \$20,000 from any person; \$25,000 from any campaign committee, political action committee, out-of-state political action committee, or federal political action committee; or \$120,000 from any political party committee to any one campaign committee of a candidate for Governor; (ii) \$12,500 from any person; \$15,000 from any campaign committee, political action committee, out-of-state political action committee, or federal political action committee; or \$120,000 from any political party committee to any one campaign committee of a candidate for Lieutenant Governor or Attorney General; (iii) \$8,000 from any person; \$10,000 from any campaign committee, political action committee, out-of-state political action committee, or federal political action committee; or \$60,000 from any political party committee to any one campaign committee of a candidate for the Senate of Virginia; (iv) \$6,000 from any person; \$7,500 from any campaign committee, political action committee, out-of-state political action committee, or federal political action committee; or \$30,000 from any political party committee to any one campaign committee of a candidate for the House of Delegates; (v) \$5,000 from any person; \$6,000 from any campaign committee, political action committee, out-of-state political action committee, or federal political action committee; or \$20,000 from any political party committee to any one campaign committee of a candidate for a constitutional office; and (vi) \$3,500 from any person; \$4,500 from any campaign committee, political action committee, out-of-state political action committee, or federal political action committee; or \$15,000 from any political party committee to any one campaign committee of a candidate for a local elected office, using 2026 as the base year, adjusted in even-numbered years by the Consumer Price Index for all items, all urban consumers (CPI-U), as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor, rounded to the nearest multiple of \$100. The Department of Elections shall perform such adjustment in January of each even-numbered year and post the adjusted candidate contribution cap on its website. The increased contribution limitation shall be in effect for the two-year period beginning on the first day following the date of the last November general election in the year preceding the year in which the contribution limitation is increased and ending on the date of the second following November general election.

B. A referendum committee or inaugural committee shall not make any contribution to any candidate or campaign committee.

C. No candidate or campaign committee shall solicit or accept contributions in excess of the limits set forth in this section.

D. The limits set forth in this section shall not apply to contributions by the candidate to his own campaign or in-kind contributions by a political party committee to the candidate.

E. Contributions made prior to the date of the next election in which a candidate seeks nomination or election to office or on the date of such election shall be subject to the contribution limits in this article unless designated in writing by the contributor as a contribution for a specific proceeding election. Additionally, a contribution made during the 60 days immediately following the date of an election may be designated in writing by the contributor as a contribution for such election.

F. The limits set forth in this section shall apply without regard to whether the candidate is opposed or unopposed in the election or nominating process.

G. A candidate who is defeated in the primary or nominating process and whose campaign committee has a deficit may continue to accept contributions in order to retire the deficit, but such contributions shall be subject to the limits set forth in this section for general elections.

H. Contributions designated for a specific election in which a candidate seeks nomination or election to office shall be held in escrow until after the date of any preceding election in which a candidate seeks nomination or election to office or until they are disbursed for the purpose of filing a final report under § 24.2-948.4.

I. Any contribution or portion thereof that is returned to the contributor within 10 days after receipt shall not be deemed to have been accepted for the purposes of applying the limits set forth in this section.

§ 24.2-948.12. Limits on contributions to political committees.

A. No person or committee organized under this chapter shall make any single contribution, or any combination of contributions, that exceeds the political committee contribution cap to any one political committee in any one calendar year. The political committee contribution cap shall be the base year amount of \$10,000 to any political committee, using 2028 as the base year, adjusted in even-numbered years by the United States Average Consumer Price Index for all items, all urban consumers (CPI-U), as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor, rounded to the nearest multiple of \$100. The Department of Elections shall perform such adjustment in January of each even-numbered year and post the adjusted political committee contribution cap on its website. The increased contribution limitation shall be in effect for the entire calendar year.

B. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection A, a referendum committee shall not make any contribution to any political committee.

C. No political committee shall solicit or accept contributions in excess of the limits set forth in this section.

D. Any contribution or portion thereof that is returned to the contributor within 60 days after receipt shall not be deemed to be a contribution for the purposes of applying the limits set forth in this section.

§ 24.2-948.13. Contributions by minors.

An individual who is 17 years old or younger may make contributions to any candidate or campaign committee that in the aggregate do not exceed the limitations on contributions under §§ 24.2-948.11 and 24.2-948.12, provided that (i) the decision to contribute is made knowingly and voluntarily; (ii) the funds, goods, or services contributed are owned or controlled by the individual; and (iii) the contribution is not made from the proceeds of a gift, the purpose of which was to provide funds to be contributed, or is not in any other way controlled by another individual.

§ 24.2-948.14. Aggregation of contributions; prohibition on indirect contributions.

For purposes of applying the contribution limits set forth in §§ 24.2-948.11 and 24.2-948.12:

1. All direct or indirect contributions made by any originating entity to benefit a candidate or committee organized under this chapter, including any contributions that are knowingly earmarked or otherwise directed through any intermediary entity, shall be deemed to be contributions from the originating entity to such candidate or committee and shall also be deemed to be contributions from the intermediary entity if such intermediary exercises any direction or control over the originating entity's choice of a recipient candidate or committee;

2. All contributions made by a person or committee whose contribution or expenditure activity is financed, maintained, or controlled by any other person or committee, including a parent, subsidiary, branch, division, department, corporation, labor organization, or association, or local unit of such corporation, labor organization, or association, or by any group of such persons, shall be deemed to be made by the same person or committee; and

3. For entities not described in subdivision 1, two or more entities shall be deemed to be a single entity sharing the same contribution limit if the entities (i) share the majority of members on their boards of directors and share two or more officers, (ii) are owned or controlled by the same majority shareholder or shareholders, (iii) are in a parent-subsidiary relationship, or (iv) have bylaws stating that one organization has the power to control the other.

§ 24.2-948.15. Restrictions on loans.

Any loan to a campaign committee shall be deemed to be a contribution from the maker and the guarantor of the loan and is subject to the contribution limits set forth in this article. A loan to a campaign committee shall be by written agreement. The proceeds of a loan made to a campaign committee shall not be subject to the contribution limits stated in this article if the loan is made by a candidate to his own campaign committee or is made by a commercial lending institution in the regular course of business and on the same terms ordinarily available to members of the public and is secured or guaranteed only by the committee.

§ 24.2-953.7. Violation of contribution limits; civil penalty.

A. Any candidate whose campaign committee accepts, or any contributor who makes to such candidate, contributions in excess of the limits imposed in this chapter shall be subject to a civil penalty of \$500 for each violation. Any such candidate whose campaign committee knowingly accepts, or any contributor who knowingly makes to such candidate, contributions in excess of the limits imposed in this chapter shall be subject to a civil penalty of up to two times the amount by which the contribution exceeds the limit. The State Board shall assess and collect such civil penalties, which shall be payable to the State Treasurer for deposit to the general fund.

B. Any political committee that accepts, or any contributor who makes to such political committee, contributions in excess of the limits imposed in this chapter shall be subject to a civil penalty of \$500 for each violation. Any political committee that knowingly accepts, or any contributor who knowingly makes to such political committee, contributions in excess of the limits imposed in this chapter shall be subject to a civil

307 *penalty of up to two times the amount by which the contribution exceeds the limit. The State Board shall*
308 *assess and collect such civil penalties, which shall be payable to the State Treasurer for deposit to the*
309 *general fund.*

310 *C. Any person who knowingly subdivides contributions into smaller amounts or uses other entities as a*
311 *conduit for the purpose of evading contribution limits imposed in this chapter shall be subject to a civil*
312 *penalty of up to two times the amount by which the contribution exceeds the limit. The State Board shall*
313 *assess and collect such civil penalties, which shall be payable to the State Treasurer for deposit to the*
314 *general fund.*

315 *D. The State Board shall order that any amount of contributions it finds to have been received in excess of*
316 *the limits imposed in this chapter shall be disgorged by the recipient entity and paid to the State Treasurer*
317 *for deposit into the general fund.*

318 **2. That the provisions of the first enactment of this act shall become effective on January 1, 2027.**

319 **3. That the Department of Elections shall promulgate regulations to implement the provisions of the**
320 **first enactment of this this act prior to its enactment.**

321 **4. That the provisions of this act may result in a net increase in periods of imprisonment or**
322 **commitment. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of Virginia, the estimated amount of the necessary**
323 **appropriation cannot be determined for periods of imprisonment in state adult correctional facilities;**
324 **therefore, Chapter 725 of the Acts of Assembly of 2025 requires the Virginia Criminal Sentencing**
325 **Commission to assign a minimum fiscal impact of \$50,000. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of**
326 **Virginia, the estimated amount of the necessary appropriation is \$0 for periods of commitment to the**
327 **custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice.**