



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
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To: Chair Silver and Commissioner Brandt

From: Lindsey Nakano, Sr. Legislative Counsel

Subject: **Legislative Update – January 2026**

Date: January 5, 2026

Subject:	Legislative Update – January 2026.....	1
I.	General Update	1
II.	Upcoming Legislative Deadlines.....	1
III.	Legislative Proposals	2
1.	Mandatory campaign training for candidates and treasurers.	2
2.	Add authority for the FPPC to permit filing extensions in emergency situations.	3
3.	Extend existing authority to waive the late filing fee for a late Form 700.	4
4.	Revise requirements for nonprofit donor disclosure in connection with sponsored travel.	5
5.	Clarify limits on use of campaign funds for travel.	8
6.	Expand lobbyist prohibition to apply to lobbyist employers.	8
7.	Add authority for automatic termination of inactive campaign committees.	10
8.	Transfer the duty to conduct lobbyist training to the FPPC.....	12
9.	Require licensure of security services paid for by campaign	13
10.	Reporting of large expenditures for candidates not on the ballot	14

I. General Update

- This report includes additional details on legislation ideas for 2026. Staff are continuing to reach out to and work with potential authors, other members, interested parties, and stakeholders, and to seek bipartisan support on Commission legislation.

II. Upcoming Legislative Deadlines

- Jan. 1 – Statutes take effect.
- Jan. 5 – Legislature reconvenes.
- Jan. 10 – Budget must be submitted by Governor.
- Jan. 16 – Last day for policy committees to hear and report to fiscal committees fiscal bills introduced in their house in the odd-numbered year.

- Jan. 23 – Last day for any committee to hear and report to the Floor bills introduced in that house in the odd-numbered year. Last day to submit bill requests to the Office of Legislative Counsel.
- Jan. 31 – Last day for each house to pass bills introduced in that house in the odd-numbered year.
- Feb. 20 – Last day for bills to be introduced.
- Mar. 26 - Apr. 6 – Spring Recess.
- Apr. 24 – Last day for policy committees to hear and report to fiscal committees fiscal bills introduced in their house.
- May 1 – Last day for policy committees to hear and report to the Floor non-fiscal bills introduced in their house.
- May 8 – Last day for policy committees to meet prior to June 1.
- May 15 – Last day for fiscal committees to hear and report to the Floor bills introduced in their house. Last day for fiscal committees to meet prior to June 1.
- May 26 – 29 Floor Session only.
- May 29 – Last day for each house to pass bills introduced in that house.
- June 1 – Committee meetings may resume.
- June 15 – Budget Bill must be passed by midnight.
- June 25 – Last day for a legislative measure to qualify for the Nov. 3 General Election ballot.
- July 2 – Last day for policy committees to meet and report bills.
- July 3 – Aug. 3 – Summer Recess.
- Aug. 14 – Last day for fiscal committees to meet and report bills to the Floor.
- Aug. 17 – 31 – Floor Session only.
- Aug. 21 – Last day to amend on the Floor.
- Aug. 31 – Last day for each house to pass bills. Final recess begins upon adjournment.
- Sept. 30 – Last day for Governor to sign or veto bills passed by the Legislature before Sept. 1 – and in the Governor’s possession on or after Sept. 1.
- Nov. 3 – General Election.

III. Legislative Proposals

1. Mandatory campaign training for candidates and treasurers.

- i. Background: The PRA includes extensive requirements for committees, candidates, and treasurers for the purpose of promoting transparency, accountability, and integrity in state and local elections. These requirements, while crucial, are not necessarily intuitive.
- ii. Proposal summary: Require state-level candidates and treasurers to complete training on campaign requirements in the PRA. The scope of the could be extended to apply to local candidates and treasurers who are not already subject to mandatory training at the local level.

iii. Effect of proposal: Candidates and treasurers would have a consistent, baseline understanding of their obligations under the PRA, which would promote better compliance.

iv. Draft language:

(a) Commencing January 1, 20XX, a candidate for elective state office and a treasurer for a committee controlled by a candidate for elective state office shall complete a training course on relevant campaign requirement in this title.

(b) A candidate or treasurer described in subdivision (a) shall complete the training within X days of the committee qualifying as a committee pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 82013.

(c) The commission shall develop, maintain, and offer the training course required pursuant to this section.

Note: This proposal may be incorporated into a single bill vehicle that includes ideas submitted to the FPPC by the California Political Treasurers Association and posted on the [agenda](#) for the FPPC's November Commission meeting.

2. Add authority for the FPPC to permit filing extensions in emergency situations.

i. Background: The PRA does not include authority to extend filing deadlines in cases of natural disaster or other emergency situations.

ii. Proposal summary: Authorize the FPPC to extend filing deadlines for individuals who live in areas affected by natural disaster or certain emergency situations.

iii. Effect of proposal: The FPPC would have authority to respond with appropriate consideration when filing is delayed due to extreme circumstances out of the filer's control.

iv. Draft language:

(a) Notwithstanding any other law, the commission may extend any filing deadline established by this title for individuals that live in an area impacted by an emergency situation.

(b) For purposes of this section, "emergency situation" means an emergency proclaimed by the Governor or a local governing body pursuant to Section 8625 or Section 8630 of the California Emergency Services Act (Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 8550) of Division 1 of Title 2).

3. Extend existing authority to waive the late filing fee for a late Form 700.

i. Background:

(a) Under existing law, a late-filed Statement of Economic Interests (SEI) is subject to a late fee of \$10/day, with a maximum fine of \$100. Existing law provides discretionary authority to waive the late fee within 30 days of the filing deadline.

(b) The FPPC's SEI unit is commonly faced with imposing late filing fees against individuals in situations where FPPC staff believe a waiver would be appropriate. However, many of these late statements are not brought to the attention of the SEI unit until after the 30-day discretionary waiver period has lapsed. These situations include, among others, first-time filers who were unaware of their filing duty, filers who were not notified of their filing duty due to administrative error, and technical errors during the filing process.

ii. Proposal summary: Authorize filing officers to waive the late filing fee for late Form 700s within 30 days of referral of the late filing to the Enforcement Division.

iii. Effect of proposal: The FPPC SEI unit would have expanded authority to respond with appropriate consideration when Form 700s are filed late for understandable reasons.

iv. Draft language:

Amending Section 91013 of the Government Code:

(a) (1) Except as provided in paragraphs (2) to (4), if any person files an original statement or report after any deadline imposed by this act, the person shall, in addition to any other penalties or remedies established by this act, be liable in the amount of ten dollars (\$10) per day after the deadline until the statement or report is filed, to the officer with whom the statement or report is required to be filed.

(2) Liability need not be enforced by the filing officer if on an impartial basis the filing officer determines that the late filing was not willful and that enforcement of the liability will not further the purposes of the act, except that liability shall not be waived pursuant to this paragraph if a statement or report is not filed within 30 days after referral to the commission on the matter for a statement of economic interest, other than a candidate's statement filed pursuant to Section 87201, 5 days for a campaign statement required to be filed 12 days before an election, and 10

days for all other statements or reports, after the filing officer has sent specific written notice of the filing requirement.

[...]

4. Revise requirements for nonprofit donor disclosure in connection with sponsored travel.

i. Background:

- (a) Existing law requires 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) nonprofit organizations that pay for travel for elected officials to report certain donors to the FPPC under specified circumstances:
 - a. The donor donated \$1,000 or more to the nonprofit organization.
 - b. The donor accompanied the elected official, either personally or through an agent, employee, or representative, for any portion of travel.
 - c. The sum of the nonprofit organization's travel expenses with regard to elected officials was greater than 1/3 of its total expenses, as reflected on the nonprofit organization's IRS Form 990 filed most recently within the last 12 months.
 - d. The nonprofit makes payments that total more than \$10,000 in a calendar year, or that total more than \$5,000 in a calendar year for a single person, for travel by an elected officer.
- (b) Under the thresholds of existing law, very few nonprofit organizations are actually required to report, as [reported](#) by the Audit Division at the February 2025 Commission meeting.

ii. Proposal summary:

- (a) Eliminate existing filing thresholds and instead require a nonprofit organization to report if they make direct expenditures over a specified amount, to be determined, in travel payments for elected officials.
- (b) Require nonprofit organizations to report the direct costs for travel, and enhance recordkeeping requirements.

- iii. Effect of proposal: The proposal would clarify which nonprofit organizations that pay for elected official travel are required to report, leading to more consistent reporting and improved transparency about nonprofit payments that benefit elected officials.
- iv. Draft language:

Amending Section 89506 of the Government Code:

(a) Payments, advances, or reimbursements for travel, including actual transportation and related lodging and subsistence that is reasonably related to a legislative or governmental purpose, or to an issue of state, national, or international public policy, are not prohibited or limited by this chapter if either of the following applies:

(1) The travel is in connection with a speech given by the elected state officer, local elected officeholder, candidate for elective state office or local elective office, an individual specified in Section 87200, member of a state board or commission, or designated employee of a state or local government agency, the lodging and subsistence expenses are limited to the day immediately preceding, the day of, and the day immediately following the speech, and the travel is within the United States.

(2) The travel is provided by a government, a governmental agency, a foreign government, a governmental authority, a bona fide public or private educational institution, as defined in Section 203 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, a nonprofit organization that is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or by a person domiciled outside the United States who substantially satisfies the requirements for tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

[...]

(f) (1) A nonprofit organization that makes direct expenditures for regularly organizes and hosts travel for elected officials and that makes payments, advances, or reimbursements that total more than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) in a calendar year, or that total more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in a calendar year for a single person, for travel by an elected state officer or local elected officeholder as described in subdivision (a) shall disclose to the Commission the both of the following:

(A) The names of donors who did both of the following in the preceding year:

(A) (i) Donated one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or more to the nonprofit organization.

~~(B)~~ (ii) Accompanied an elected state officer or local elected officeholder, either personally or through an agent, employee, or representative, for any portion of travel described in subdivision (a).

(B) Each payment for travel by an elected state officer or local elected officeholder and the name of the individual for whom the payment for travel was made.

(2) For purposes of this subdivision, a nonprofit organization “regularly organizes and hosts travel for elected officials” if the sum of the nonprofit organization’s expenses that relate to any of the following types of activities with regard to elected officials was greater than one-third of its total expenses reflected on the nonprofit organization’s Internal Revenue Service Form 990, or the equivalent, filed most recently within the last 12 months:

(A) Travel.

(B) Study tours.

(C) Conferences, conventions, and meetings.

~~(3)~~ (2) This subdivision does not preclude a finding that a nonprofit organization is acting as an intermediary or agent of the donor. If the nonprofit organization is acting as an intermediary or agent of the donor, all of the following apply:

(A) The donor to the nonprofit organization is the source of the gift.

(B) The donor shall be identified as a financial interest under Section 87103.

(C) The gift shall be reported as required by Section 87207.

(D) The gift shall be subject to the limitations on gifts specified in Section 89503.

(3) A nonprofit organization that is required to report under this subdivision shall maintain detailed accounts, records, bills, and receipts necessary to prepare the report. The accounts, records, bills, and receipts shall be retained by the nonprofit organization for no less than X years.

(4) For purposes of this subdivision, a nonprofit organization includes an organization that is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) or Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

5. Clarify limits on use of campaign funds for travel.

i. Background:

- (a) Under the PRA, all campaign funds are held in trust for expenses associated with the election of the candidate or expenses associated with holding office.
- (b) The PRA permits use of campaign funds for travel expenses and necessary accommodations when these expenditures are directly related to a political, legislative, or governmental purpose.
 - a. Payments for travel and necessary accommodations are considered “directly related to a political, legislative, or governmental purpose” if the payments would meet standards similar to the standards of Sections 162 and 274 of the Internal Revenue Code for deductions of travel expenses under the federal income tax law.
 - b. The standards cited above can be difficult to understand and apply for the regulated community and for FPPC staff.

ii. Proposal summary: Clarify the limits on use of campaign funds for transportation and lodging by creating a safe harbor provision that permits travel expenditures within a specified monetary limit, such as travelling under the lowest available class. If the candidate or elected official exceeds that limit, they must explain in their campaign statement how the expenditure directly relates to a political, legislative, or governmental purpose.

iii. Effect of proposal: Candidates and elected officers would have clear limits for travel expenditures that are easy to understand and apply. Additional disclosure on campaign statements for excess travel expenditures increases accountability and transparency.

iv. Draft language in development.

6. Expand lobbyist prohibition to apply to lobbyist employers.

i. Background:

- (a) Existing law prohibits a lobbyist or lobbying firm from attempting to create a fictitious appearance of public favor or disfavor of any legislative or administrative action or causing any communication to be sent to an official or state candidate in the name of any fictitious person or in the name of any real person, except with the consent of such real person.

- (b) The prohibition above may not reach who is paying for the communications, i.e., lobbyist employers. Additionally, emerging technology has been used recently to mislead regarding what certain legislative or administrative actions would do.
- ii. Proposal summary: Extend the prohibition above to additionally apply to lobbyist employers.
- iii. Effect of proposal: The existing prohibition would be strengthened and would further deter deceptive practices intended to influence legislative or administrative actions.
- iv. Draft language:

Amending Section 86205 of the Government Code:

~~(a) No~~ **A** lobbyist or lobbying firm shall **not**:

~~(a)~~ **(1)** Do anything with the purpose of placing any elected state officer, legislative official, agency official, or state candidate under personal obligation to the lobbyist, the lobbying firm, or the lobbyist's or the firm's employer.

~~(b)~~ **(2)** Deceive or attempt to deceive any elected state officer, legislative official, agency official, or state candidate with regard to any material fact pertinent to any pending or proposed legislative or administrative action.

~~(c)~~ **(3)** Cause or influence the introduction of any bill or amendment thereto for the purpose of thereafter being employed to secure its passage or defeat.

~~(d) Attempt to create a fictitious appearance of public favor or disfavor of any proposed legislative or administrative action or to cause any communication to be sent to any elected state officer, legislative official, agency official, or state candidate in the name of any fictitious person or in the name of any real person, except with the consent of such real person.~~

~~(e)~~ **(4)** Represent falsely, either directly or indirectly, that the lobbyist or the lobbying firm can control the official action of any elected state officer, legislative official, or agency official.

~~(f)~~ **(5)** Accept or agree to accept any payment in any way contingent upon the defeat, enactment, or outcome of any proposed legislative or administrative action.

(b) A lobbyist, lobbying firm, or lobbyist employer shall not create or attempt to create a fictitious appearance of public favor or disfavor of any proposed legislative or administrative action or to cause any communication to be sent to any elected state officer, legislative official, agency official, or state candidate in the name of any fictitious person or in the name of any real person, except with the consent of such real person.

7. Add authority for automatic termination of inactive campaign committees.

i. Background:

- a. The PRA and related regulations provide detailed requirements for terminating recipient committees.
- b. Many recipient committees that are no longer engaged in campaign activity fail to terminate and mistakenly discontinue filing required campaign statements, often leading to multiple complaints and referrals to the Enforcement Division. In addition, some committees register but never qualify. Those committees remain as active committees in the system unless terminated.
- c. Existing regulation permits administrative termination of committees that meet certain criteria, under the discretion of the Chief of the Enforcement Division, and includes opportunity for the committee to object to termination within 45 days of receiving notice.
 - i. As a discretionary process, the administrative termination process requires staff review and an active assessment and determination by the Chief of Enforcement, which can be time-consuming and resource-intensive.
- d. Additional statutory authority is needed to implement a streamlined, automatic termination process whereby committees may be terminated as a matter of law once certain objective criteria are met.

- ii. Proposal summary: Add authority to automatically terminate committees that have been inactive for a specified period of time and that reported a minimal cash balance on their last campaign statement. The process would include advanced written notice and opportunity to object before the termination takes effect.
- iii. Effect of proposal: Fewer complaints and referrals would be submitted to the Enforcement Division for inactive committees, and staff time would be saved on the administrative termination process.

iv. Draft language:

(a) (1) If a committee, as defined in subdivision (a) of Section 82103, meets the conditions in paragraph (2), the Secretary of State shall provide a written notice to the committee's treasurer that the treasurer's appointment as treasurer of the committee will automatically lapse after 90 days of the date of receipt of the notice and the committee will be automatically terminated after 180 days of the date of receipt of the notice, unless the committee files a written objection to the proposed lapse or termination before the respective 90-day or 180-day period.

(2) The treasurer's appointment shall lapse pursuant to paragraph (1) if all of the following apply:

(A) The committee failed to submit a campaign report for at least the preceding 12 months.

(B) The committee (i) had an ending cash balance of \$3,000 or less on its last campaign statement, or (ii) had an ending cash balance of \$5,000 or less on its last campaign statement and the committee owes \$ 2,000 or more to the controlling candidate.

(C) The committee does not file a written objection within 90 days of the date of receipt of the notice sent pursuant to paragraph (1).

(b) If the committee treasurer's appointment has lapsed pursuant to subdivision (a) and the committee does not file a written objection to termination within 180 days of the date of receipt of the notice sent pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (a), the Secretary of State shall terminate the committee.

(c) A committee shall not receive contributions or make expenditures exceeding the ending cash balance on the committee's last campaign statement after Secretary of State terminates the committee, except to pay outstanding filing fees or fines.

(d) The Secretary of State shall provide notice of the termination of a committee pursuant to this section within 30 days to the filing officers with whom the committee was required to file its last campaign statement.

8. Transfer the duty to conduct lobbyist training to the FPPC.

- i. Background: Existing law outside of the PRA requires the legislative ethics committees to conduct a semiannual orientation course on the relevant ethical issues and laws relating to lobbying, in consultation with the FPPC. Lobbyists are required to pay a fee for attending the course.
- ii. Proposal summary: Transfer the duty to conduct this training to the FPPC, with training to be conducted virtually consistent with current practice. The FPPC would consult with the legislative ethics committees on components of the training that are outside of the PRA. Existing fee revenue would be transferred to the FPPC to fund the development of the training and future fee revenue would be available for the virtual training and other IT tools to provide advice and training to lobbyists.
- iii. Effect of proposal: The FPPC would be responsible for conducting the lobbyist training and may have additional fee revenue available for other beneficial IT training resources for lobbyists.
- iv. Draft language:

Amend Section 8956 of the Government Code:

(a) The appropriate legislative ethics committees shall conduct at least semiannually an orientation course of the relevant statutes and regulations governing official conduct. The curriculum and presentation of the course shall be established by house rules.

~~(b) The committees shall conduct at least semiannually an orientation course on the relevant ethical issues and laws relating to lobbying, in consultation with the Fair Political Practices Commission. The course shall also include information on each house of the Legislature's policies against harassment, including sexual harassment, in connection with lobbying activities. One of the semiannual courses shall be held prior to June 30 of each year. This course may be combined with the course described in subdivision (a).~~

~~(c) (b) At least once in each biennial session, each Member of the Legislature and each designated employee of the Legislature shall attend one of these courses. the course.~~

~~(d) The committees shall impose fees on lobbyists for attending the course described in subdivision (b). The fees shall be set at an amount that will enable the lobbyists' participation in the course to be funded from those fees to the fullest extent possible.~~

Add Section 86102.5 to the Government Code:

(a) Commencing January 1, 20XX, the commission shall develop, maintain, and offer an orientation course on the relevant ethical issues and laws relating to lobbying, and on each house of the Legislature's policies against harassment, including sexual harassment, in connection with lobbying activities. The curriculum of the course shall be developed in consultation with the appropriate legislative ethics committees. The course shall be available on-demand through an online platform, webpage, or application.

(b) The commission may impose fees on lobbyists for attending the course described in subdivision (a). The fees shall be set at an amount that will enable the lobbyists' participation in the course to be funded from those fees to the fullest extent possible.

Unused funds collected by the legislative ethics committees from lobbyists for this course pursuant to Section 8956 before January 1, 20XX, shall be transferred to the commission for the purpose of developing the course.

9. Require licensure of security services paid for by campaign

- i. Background: Existing law authorizes use of campaign funds to pay for security expenses under certain conditions. For purposes of this provision, "security expenses" includes, among other things, the reasonable costs of providing personal security to a candidate, elected officer, or the immediate family or staff of a candidate or elected officer.
- ii. Proposal summary: This proposal would clarify that campaign funds may be used for security personnel only if the security personnel is appropriately licensed by the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services.
- iii. Draft language:

Amending Section 89517.5:

(a) (1) For purposes of this section, "security expenses" include all of the following:

(A) The reasonable costs of installing and monitoring a home or office electronic security for a candidate, elected officer, or the immediate family or staff of a candidate or elected officer.

(B) The reasonable costs of providing personal security to a candidate, elected officer, or the immediate family or staff of a candidate or elected officer. Campaign funds may be used to pay security personnel pursuant to

this section only if the security personnel holds the appropriate license issued by the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services.

(C) Any other tangible item related to security for a candidate, elected officer, or the immediate family or staff of a candidate or elected officer.

(2) "Security expenses" do not include either of the following:

(A) Payments to the candidate's or elected officer's spouse, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, brother, sister, parent-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, nephew, niece, aunt, uncle, or first cousin or the spouse of any such person.

(B) Payments for a firearm.

(b) (1) Notwithstanding Section 89517, campaign funds may be used to pay, or reimburse the state, for security expenses to protect a candidate, an elected officer, or the immediate family or staff of a candidate or elected officer, provided that the threat or potential threat to safety arises from the candidate's or elected officer's activities, duties, or status as a candidate or elected officer or from staff's position as staff of the candidate or elected officer.

(2) (A) A candidate or elected officer may expend campaign funds pursuant to this section without any monetary cap until January 1, 2029.

(B) Beginning January 1, 2029, a candidate or elected officer may expend up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) of campaign funds pursuant to this section per calendar year. This limit applies regardless of the number of offices the candidate or elected officer seeks or holds.

[...]

10. Reporting of large expenditures for candidates not on the ballot

- i. Background: Under existing law, committees must submit regular reports on their financial activity, including semiannual and preelection reports, and reports that are triggered when the committee meets certain activity thresholds, such as 24-hour contribution reports.
- ii. Proposal: This proposal would require a new report when a candidate controlled committee makes expenditures over a certain amount to a single recipient when the candidate will not be listed on the ballot at the next election.
- iii. Effect of proposal: This proposal would enable more stringent oversight and better transparency over large campaign expenditures during periods

when the candidate is likely not actively engaged in significant campaign activity.

iv. Draft language:

(a) A candidate controlled committee established for an elective office for the controlling candidate shall submit a report if both of the following apply:

(1) The candidate will not appear on the ballot at the next election.

(2) The committee makes expenditures to a single person totaling \$ ____ or more in any calendar month.

(b) The report shall be submitted within 14 days of the end of any calendar month in which reporting is required pursuant to subdivision (a)

(c) The report shall include all of the following information:

(1) The full name and street address of a person to whom one or more expenditures were made that meet or exceed the threshold in paragraph (2) of subdivision (a).

(2) The amount of each expenditure.

(3) A description of the consideration for which each expenditure was made.

(4) If applicable, the relationship of the person or reportable subvendor to the candidate or any individual with authority to approve the expenditure of campaign funds held by the committee.