

Joint Legislative Ethics Committee			Main Operating Appropriations Bill H.B. 96
Executive	As Passed By House	As Passed By Senate	As Enacted
<b>JLECD1     Legislative Ethics Committee</b> <b>Section:    321.20</b> Reappropriates the certified available balance of GRF ALI 028321, Legislative Ethics Committee, at the end of FY 2025 and FY 2026 to FY 2026 and FY 2027, respectively.	<b>Section:    321.20</b> Same as the Executive.	<b>Section:    321.20</b> Same as the Executive.	<b>Section:    321.20</b> Same as the Executive.

Executive		As Passed By House		As Passed By Senate		As Enacted	
ELCCD3	Campaign finance law			R.C.	102.08, (enacted), 3517.01, 3517.08, 3517.10, 3517.102, 3517.105, 3517.106, 3517.107, 3517.1010 (enacted), 3517.1011, 3517.121, 3517.13, 3517.152 (3517.14), 3517.992 (3517.99), 3599.03, 3921.22, 4123.442, 4503.03; Section 525.50		
No provision.		No provision.			Eliminates prohibitions against a corporation or labor organization making an independent expenditure regarding a candidate.		No provision.
No provision.		No provision.			Eliminates dollar limits on contributions to entities that make only independent expenditures.		No provision.
No provision.		No provision.			Prohibits a political action committee (PAC) or political contributing entity (PCE) that accepts a contribution from a corporation or labor organization from then making a contribution to any entity other than one that makes only independent expenditures.		No provision.

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No provision.	No provision.	<p>Requires a corporation or labor organization that makes independent expenditures to report its expenditures in the same manner as other political entities by doing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Expanding and clarifying the definition of a PCE to include any entity that makes contributions or expenditures and that is not an individual, a campaign committee, a political party, a legislative campaign fund, or a PAC.</li><li>- Allowing an unincorporated business to continue to make contributions in the names of its individual partners, owners, or members, instead of classifying the entity as a PCE.</li><li>- Changing the definition of an independent expenditure to include any use of funds or anything of value for that purpose, meaning that a PCE that uses its own money instead of contributions to fund an independent expenditure must report the expenditure.</li><li>- Clarifying that "independent expenditure" includes expenditures concerning ballot issues, as well as expenditures concerning candidates.</li><li>- Making clear that all PCEs must comply with the continuing law that requires entities that engage in political advertising to report the expenditure and to identify themselves in the advertisement as the funding source.</li></ul>	No provision.

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No provision.	No provision.	Allows a person who is not a U.S. citizen or national, but is a lawful permanent U.S. resident (green card holder), to make campaign contributions, expenditures, and independent expenditures for state and local candidates, but not ballot issues.	No provision.

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ELCCD2	Abolishment of the Ohio Elections Commission					
	R.C.	109.02, 145.055, 145.99, 742.044, 742.99, 3307.074, 3307.99, 3309.074, 3309.99, 3501.05, 3501.11, 3513.04, 3513.05, 3513.10, 3513.261, 3517.01, 3517.08, 3517.081, 3517.102, 3517.109, 3517.1012, 3517.11, 3517.121, 3517.13, 3517.153 (3517.14), 3517.15, 3517.16, 3517.155 (3517.17), 3517.993 (3517.18), 3517.20, 3517.21, 3517.22, 3517.23, 3517.991 (reenacted), 3517.992 (3517.99), 5505.046, 5505.99, Section 525.50; Repealed: 3517.14, 3517.151, 3517.152, 3517.154, 3517.156, 3517.157, 3517.99, 3517.991	R.C.	109.02, 111.29 (enacted), 145.054, 145.055, 145.99, 742.043, 742.044, 742.99, 3307.073, 3307.074, 3307.99, 3309.073, 3309.074, 3309.99, 3501.05, 3501.11, 3513.04, 3513.05, 3513.10, 3513.261, 3517.01, 3517.08, 3517.081, 3517.102, 3517.109, 3517.1012, 3517.11, 3517.121, 3517.13, 3517.152 (3517.14), 3517.153 (3517.15), 3517.154 (3517.16), 3517.155 (3517.17), 3517.157 (3517.18), 3517.993 (3517.171), 3517.20, 3517.21, 3517.22, 3517.23, 3517.991 (reenacted), 3517.992 (3517.99), 5505.045, 5505.046, 5505.99, Repealed: 3517.14, 3517.151, 3517.152, 3517.154, 3517.156, 3517.157, 3517.99, 3517.991; Section 395.10, 525.50	R.C.	109.02, 111.29 (enacted), 145.054, 145.055, 145.99, 742.043, 742.044, 742.99, 3307.073, 3307.074, 3307.99, 3309.073, 3309.074, 3309.99, 3501.05, 3501.055, 3501.11, 3513.04, 3513.05, 3513.10, 3513.261, 3517.01, 3517.08, 3517.081, 3517.102, 3517.109, 3517.109, 3517.11, 3517.121, 3517.13, 3517.152 (3517.14), 3517.153 (3517.15), 3517.154 (3517.16), 3517.155 (3517.17), 3517.157 (3517.18), 3517.993 (3517.171), 3517.20, 3517.21, 3517.22, 3517.23, 3517.991 (reenacted), 3517.992 (3517.99), 5505.045, 5505.046, 5505.99, Repealed: 3517.14, 3517.151, 3517.152, 3517.154, 3517.156, 3517.157, 3517.99, 3517.991; Section 395.10, 525.50
No provision.	Abolishes ELC as of January 1, 2026. Requires ELC, between the bill's effective date and January 1, 2026, to continue to hear the matters pending before it based on the current law requirements, but prohibits any new complaints from being filed with ELC during that time. Requires, instead, that complaints be filed with SOS or the board of elections, as applicable.		Same as the House, but replaces the ELC with a five-member Ohio Election Integrity Commission (OEIC), to be appointed by SOS and the leaders of the General Assembly. Sets the qualifications, terms of office, compensation of the members of the new Commission, and process for removing a member for cause.		Same as the Senate, but (1) eliminates the ability of a legislatively appointed member of the OEIC to qualify for the position by having been a candidate for elective office, (2) requires at least three members of the OEIC to be attorneys, with any non-attorneys having at least four years of experience in election administration, and (3) sets OEIC members' salaries at \$25,000, the same as current ELC members, instead of \$5,000.	

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No provision.	Requires complaints regarding violations of the Campaign Finance Law to be heard by a hearing officer appointed by SOS or to be heard by a board of elections, depending on the violation, before any prosecution may commence.	Replaces the House provision with one that gives the new Commission jurisdiction over the same campaign finance related offenses as ELC currently has, plus certain voting- and petition-related offenses. Requires all complaints to be filed with SOS, reviewed and heard by an SOS attorney, and disposed of by SOS, except in the case of a conflict of interest.	Same as the Senate, but (1) allows the Election Integrity Unit to initiate a complaint under the OEIC process, and (2) specifies that for certain petition, voter registration, and absent voting violations prosecution may commence at any time, regardless of whether the OEIC process has begun or is complete. Requires the Election Integrity Unit to review and investigate complaints and make recommendations to SOS, instead of requiring and SOS-appointed attorney to do so.
No provision.	No provision.	Requires an attorney appointed by the new Commission to hear the matter if the subject of the complaint objects to SOS's determination within 14 days.	Same as the Senate.
No provision.	Changes several procedural requirements regarding administrative hearings of those complaints and the prosecutor to whom a violation may be referred, but generally retains the current administrative and criminal penalties.	Same as the House but allows SOS or the new Commission to dispose of a complaint as follows: (1 ) Find no violation and, if applicable, find the complaint frivolous; (2) find a violation and impose a fine of up to \$1,000 per occurrence; and (3) find a significant violation or repeated violations and refer the matter for prosecution.	Same as the Senate, but also allows the SOS or the OEIC, as applicable, to impose an administrative fine for a campaign finance violation up to the maximum applicable criminal fine amount, or up to \$1,000 for a petition, voter registration, or absent voting violation.
No provision.	No provision.	Requires the AGO, in the case of a conflict of interest with the SOS, to appoint an attorney to hear the complaint and requires the AGO to make a determination in place of the SOS.	Same as the Senate, but allows the AGO to designate any person or persons to investigate the complaint in place of the Election Integrity Unit.

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No provision.	Transfers any matters pending before ELC as of January 1, 2026, to SOS or a board of elections (BOEs), as applicable, for disposition under the amendment.	Same as the House, but to only the SOS and not BOEs.	Same as the Senate, but also requires complaints currently pending before the ELC to be transferred directly to the OEIC for hearing and disposition instead of beginning with the SOS and Election Integrity Unit procedures. Additionally, excludes those currently pending complaints from the bill's time limits for the OEIC to resolve them.
No provision.	Requires a complaint to be resolved within 180 days after it is filed. Requires a complaint filed within 90 days before a relevant election to be resolved before the election, if practicable.	No provision.	Same as the House, but requires the OEIC process to be complete within 180 days after the matter is appealed to the OEIC. Requires the OEIC to complete the process before the day of the election, if practicable, if the matter is appealed to the OEIC less than 180 days before an election and the matter relates to the election.
No provision.	Allows SOS to issue advisory opinions regarding the Campaign Finance Law and specifies that existing ELC opinions are considered SOS opinions unless and until they are amended or rescinded.	Replaces the House provision with one that instead transfers the authority to issue advisory opinions from the ELC to the Ohio Election Integrity Commission and additionally requires the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee to issue advisory opinions for campaign finance for General Assembly members and candidates (See ELC 3).	Same as the Senate.
No provision.	No provision.	No provision.	Requires all meetings of the OEIC and all hearings conducted by its attorney under the Administrative Procedure Act to be in person, except that the alleged violator may choose to appear by video conference.

Executive	As Passed By House	As Passed By Senate	As Enacted
No provision.	No provision.	Requires the SOS to provide staff for the Ohio Election Integrity Commission. Transfers ELC's current staff to SOS instead of to the new Commission.	Same as the Senate.
No provision.	Provides procedures for ELC to wind up its affairs and transfer its records, assets, and liabilities to SOS.	Same as the House.	Same as the House.
No provision.	Removes all candidate filing fees credited to the Ohio Elections Commission Fund (see ELCCD1).	Replaces the House provision with one that transfers all candidate filing fees credited to the Ohio Elections Commission Fund to the Ohio Election Integrity Commission Fund (Fund 5CS1) (see ELCCD1).	Same as the Senate.
No provision.	Transfers the cash balance of the Ohio Elections Commission Fund (Fund 4P20) to the Corporate and Uniform Commercial Code Filing Fund (Fund 5990) on January 1, 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter. Abolishes Fund 4P20 after the transfer is complete.	Same as the House, however transfers the cash balance of the Ohio Elections Commission Fund (Fund 4P20) to the Ohio Election Integrity Commission Fund (Fund 5CS1) on January 1, 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter.	Same as the Senate.
No provision.	Cancels any existing encumbrances against Fund 4P20 ALI 051601, Operating Support, and reestablishes them against Fund 5990 ALI 050630, Elections Support Supplement, used by SOS. Appropriates the reestablished encumbrance amounts.	Same as the House, but instead reestablishes existing encumbrances against Fund 5CS1 ALI 050604, Ohio Election Integrity Commission, used by SOS.	Same as the Senate.
No provision.	No provision.	Requires SOS to refer all past due fines imposed by ELC, SOS, or the new Commission to AGO for collection.	Same as the Senate.



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	Fiscal effect: County Boards of Elections and the SOS will incur costs previously incurred by the ELC for complaints regarding violations of Campaign Finance Law.	Fiscal effect: The SOS will incur costs previously incurred by the ELC for complaints regarding violations of Campaign Finance Law. The bill appropriates \$250,000 in FY 2026 to SOS's Fund 5CS1 ALI 050604, Ohio Election Integrity Commission, to cover operating expenses.	Fiscal effect: Same as the Senate.