

Senate Bill 487

By: Senators Cowser of the 46th, Albers of the 56th, Kennedy of the 18th, Gooch of the 51st and Burke of the 11th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 5 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to ethics
2 in government, so as to revise a provision relating to disclosure reports; to provide for
3 political party caucus campaign committees; to provide for a definition; to provide for
4 distribution and disposition of funds; to provide for procedures; to provide for related
5 matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Chapter 5 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to ethics in
9 government, is amended by revising subsection (e) of Code Section 21-5-34, relating to
10 disclosure reports, as follows:

11 "(e) Any person who makes contributions to, accepts contributions for, or makes
12 expenditures on behalf of candidates, any political party caucus campaign committee, as
13 defined by Code Section 21-5-34.2, and any independent committee, shall file a registration
14 in the same manner as is required of campaign committees prior to accepting or making
15 contributions or expenditures. Such persons, other than political party caucus campaign
16 committees and independent committees, shall also file campaign contribution disclosure
17 reports at the same times as required of the candidates they are supporting and a
18 December 31 campaign contribution disclosure report regardless of whether the candidate
19 they are supporting has a December 31 campaign contribution disclosure report due. The
20 following persons shall be exempt from the foregoing registration and reporting
21 requirements:

- 22 (1) Individuals making aggregate contributions of \$25,000.00 or less directly to
23 candidates or the candidates' campaign committees in one calendar year;
24 (2) Persons other than individuals making aggregate contributions and expenditures to
25 or on behalf of candidates of \$25,000.00 or less in one calendar year; and

26 (3) Contributors who make contributions to only one candidate during one calendar
27 year."

28 **SECTION 2.**

29 Said chapter is further amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

30 "21-5-34.2.

31 (a) As used in this Code section, the term 'political party caucus campaign committee'
32 means a committee, corporation, or organization chaired by the majority leader of the
33 Senate, the majority leader of the House of Representatives, the minority leader of the
34 Senate, the minority leader of the House of Representatives, the majority caucus
35 chairperson in the Senate, the minority caucus chairperson in the Senate, the majority
36 caucus chairperson in the House of Representatives, or the minority caucus chairperson in
37 the House of Representatives.

38 (b) A political party caucus campaign committee may receive contributions from persons
39 who are members or supporters of the political party caucus campaign committee and
40 expend such funds as permitted by this Code section. No person shall chair more than one
41 political party caucus campaign committee.

42 (c) If a person chairing a political party caucus campaign committee ceases to hold the
43 office as described in subsection (a) of this Code section, such person shall transfer the
44 remaining assets of the political party caucus campaign committee, if any, to another
45 political party caucus campaign committee within 60 days, name an eligible person as the
46 new chair of the political party caucus campaign committee within 60 days, or dispose of
47 the political party caucus campaign committee's assets as provided by Code
48 Section 21-5-33.

49 (d) A political party caucus campaign committee may:

50 (1) Accept contributions or make expenditures for the purpose of affecting the outcome
51 of any election or advocating for the election or defeat of any caucus member candidate
52 or any candidate for any office in the body of the political party caucus campaign
53 committee;

54 (2) Defray ordinary and necessary expenses incurred in connection with any caucus
55 member candidate's campaign for elective office or any candidate for any office in the
56 body of the political party caucus campaign committee; and

57 (3) Defray ordinary and necessary expenses incurred in connection with a public officer's
58 fulfillment or retention of such office, provided that the public officer is a member of the
59 caucus.

60 (e) A political party caucus campaign committee that accepts contributions or makes
61 expenditures in excess of \$500.00 shall register with the commission within ten days of

62 such accepted contribution or such expenditure and thereafter shall file disclosure reports
63 pursuant to the schedule defined for candidates and campaign committees in subsection (c)
64 of Code Section 21-5-34. Such disclosure reports shall be made pursuant to subsection (b)
65 of Code Section 21-5-34. The contribution limits in Code Section 21-5-41 shall not apply
66 to contributions to a political party caucus campaign committee or expenditures made by
67 a political party caucus campaign committee in support of a candidate or a group of named
68 candidates. All communications paid for by expenditures of the political party caucus
69 campaign committee shall contain a disclaimer, either audibly or in writing, that the
70 communication is paid for by the political party caucus campaign committee, unless such
71 disclaimer is impracticable.
72 (f) A political party caucus campaign committee shall be a separate legal entity from a
73 candidate's campaign committee and shall not be considered a political action committee
74 or an independent committee."

75

SECTION 3.

76 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.