

SUBJECT: Managing the State Employee Charitable Campaign

COMMITTEE: State Affairs — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 10 ayes — Wolens, Brimer, Carter, Counts, Danburg, Hilbert, Hunter, D. Jones, Longoria, Ramsay

0 nays

5 absent — S. Turner, Alvarado, Craddick, McCall, Stiles

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, Local and Uncontested Calendar, April 24 — 29-0

WITNESSES: None

BACKGROUND : In 1993, the 73rd Legislature created the State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC). This annual campaign, conducted in communities where state employees work, allows state employees to make contributions to eligible charitable organizations through automatic payroll deductions. The State Policy Committee (SPC) manages the campaign and is authorized to select as the state campaign manager an eligible federated community campaign organization. These are defined as umbrella fund raising organizations with demonstrated expertise in conducting workplace charitable campaigns and distributing funds raised through a cooperative community campaign to at least five agencies that provide direct services to residents of the campaign area. The federated community campaign organization works with local employee committees on local campaign efforts.

Campaign committee members at all levels may not be compensated for their service and are not entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred in performing their functions.

DIGEST: SB 1036 would allow SPC to select a different campaign manager if no federated community campaign organization applied. SPC could select instead a charitable organization it determined had demonstrated the capacity to conduct a state campaign. The bill also would allow a local employee committee to select a charitable organization with demonstrated

capacity to conduct a local campaign to serve as local campaign manager if no federated community campaign organization applied.

SB 1036 also would specify that campaign committee members could not be reimbursed for expenses from state funds and provide that the attorney general would represent the state policy committee and each local employee committee in all legal matters.

The bill would take effect September 1, 1997.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

SB 1036 would promote efficient operation of the State Employee Charitable Campaign. It would authorize the SPC and local committees alike to use charities with proven track records as campaign managers in the absence of a federated community campaign organizations. Especially at the local level, lack of a qualified manager would seriously jeopardize the success of a campaign.

The Texas SECC is the second most successful in the country, with total pledges amounting to more than \$3 million as of December 1996. It has great potential to be even more successful, however, if operations are streamlined. And as the campaign grows, so does the risk of liability. Currently, the attorney general acts in an advisory capacity only; SB 1036 would ensure that the office stood ready to provide legal counsel whenever required.

With growth also come new expenses. Current law prohibits members of committees from being reimbursed for expenses incurred because of their service. The original intent was that committee members should not be reimbursed with *state funds*. SB 1036 would clarify existing practices because all travel expenses of the committee are budgeted into the state campaign manager's budget. Employee volunteers from all across Texas participate in the campaign; many would not be able to afford to continue their very necessary involvement if they received no reimbursement for their expenses.

SB 1036
House Research Organization
page 3

OPPONENTS No apparent opposition.
SAY: