AMENDED IN SENATE AUGUST 15, 2016
AMENDED IN SENATE AUGUST 1, 2016
AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 14, 2016
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 31, 2016
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 19, 2016
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 6, 2016
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 17, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2523

Introduced by Assembly Member Mullin (Coauthor: Assembly Member Gonzalez)

February 19, 2016

An act to amend and repeal Sections 35177 and 72029 of the Education Code, to amend and repeal Sections 10003, 10202, and 10544 of the Elections Code, and to amend Section 85301 of, to amend, repeal, and add Sections 85305, 85306, 85307, 85315, 85316, 85317, and 85318 of, and to add Section 85702.5 to, the Government Code, relating to elections.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2523, as amended, Mullin. Local elective offices: contribution limitations.

The Political Reform Act of 1974 prohibits a person, other than a small contributor committee or political party committee, from making to a candidate for elective state office, for statewide elective office, or

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for office of the Governor, and prohibits those candidates from accepting from a person, a contribution totaling more than a specified amount per election. For a candidate for elective state office other than a candidate for statewide elective office, the limitation on contributions is \$3,000 per election, as that amount is adjusted by the Fair Political Practices Commission in January of every odd-numbered year.

Existing law authorizes a county, city, or district to limit campaign contributions in local elections. Existing law authorizes the governing board of a school district or of a community college district to limit campaign expenditures or contributions in elections to district offices. The act specifies that it does not prevent the Legislature or any other state or local agency from imposing additional requirements on a person if the requirements do not prevent the person from complying with the act, and that the act does not nullify contribution limitations or prohibitions by any local jurisdiction that apply to elections for local elective office, as specified.

This bill, commencing January 1, 2018, instead would prohibit a person from making to a candidate for local elective office, and would prohibit a candidate for local elective office from accepting from a person, a contribution totaling more than the amount set forth *in the act* for limitations on contributions to a candidate for elective state office. This bill would *also* authorize a county, city, special district, or school district to impose a limitation that is different from the limitation imposed by this bill. This bill would repeal the authorization for the governing board of a school district or of a community college district to limit campaign expenditures in elections to district offices. This bill would make specified provisions of the act relating to contribution limitations applicable to a candidate for a local elective office, except as specified.

The act makes a violation of its provisions punishable as a misdemeanor and subject to specified penalties.

This bill would add the contribution limitation imposed by the bill to the act's provisions, thereby making a violation of the limitation punishable as a misdemeanor and subject to specified penalties. However, the bill would specify that a violation of a limitation imposed by a local government is not subject to the act's enforcement provisions. The bill would authorize a local government that imposes a limitation that is different from the limitation imposed by this bill to adopt enforcement standards for a violation of the limitation imposed by the local government agency, including administrative, civil, or criminal

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penalties. By expanding the scope of an existing crime with regard to a violation of a contribution limitation imposed by the bill, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

The Political Reform Act of 1974, an initiative measure, provides that the Legislature may amend the act to further the act's purposes upon a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of each house and compliance with specified procedural requirements.

This bill would declare that it furthers the purposes of the act.

Vote: $\frac{2}{3}$. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: yes.

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The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:
- (a) Most states impose limitations on contributions to candidates for local elective offices. California is among the minority of states without these contribution limitations.
 - (b) Most local governments in this state have not independently imposed limitations on contributions to candidates for local elective offices.
 - (c) In local jurisdictions in this state that have not imposed limitations on contributions, candidates for local elective offices often receive contributions that would exceed the limitations for a state Senate campaign, even though most local jurisdictions contain far fewer people than the average state Senate district.
 - (d) In local jurisdictions in this state that have not imposed limitations on contributions, candidates for local elective office sometimes raise 40 percent or more of their total campaign funds from a single contributor.
 - (e) A system allowing unlimited contributions to a candidate for local elective office creates the risk and the perception that local elected officials are beholden to their contributors and will act in the best interest of those contributors at the expense of the people.

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(f) This state has a statewide interest in preventing actual corruption and the appearance of corruption at all levels of state government.

- (g) This act establishes a limitation on contributions to a candidate for local elective office in a jurisdiction in which the local government has not established a limitation. However, a local government may establish a different limitation that is more precisely tailored to the needs of its communities.
- 9 SEC. 2. Section 35177 of the Education Code is amended to 10 read:
 - 35177. (a) The governing board of a district may by resolution limit campaign expenditures or contributions in elections to district offices.
 - (b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2018, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2018, deletes or extends that date.
 - SEC. 3. Section 72029 of the Education Code is amended to read:
 - 72029. (a) The governing board of a community college district may by resolution limit campaign expenditures or contributions in elections to district offices.
 - (b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2018, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2018, deletes or extends that date.
 - SEC. 4. Section 10003 of the Elections Code is amended to read:
 - 10003. (a) A county may by ordinance or resolution limit campaign contributions in county elections.
 - (b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2018, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2018, deletes or extends that date.
 - SEC. 5. Section 10202 of the Elections Code is amended to read:
 - 10202. (a) A city may, by ordinance or resolution, limit campaign contributions in municipal elections.
 - (b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2018, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2018, deletes or extends that date.
- 39 SEC. 6. Section 10544 of the Elections Code is amended to 40 read:

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10544. (a) A governing body of a district may, by resolution, limit campaign contributions in elections to district offices.

- (b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2018, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2018, deletes or extends that date.
- SEC. 7. Section 85301 of the Government Code is amended to read:
- 85301. (a) A person, other than a small contributor committee or political party committee, may not make to a candidate for elective state office other than a candidate for statewide elective office, and a candidate for elective state office other than a candidate for statewide elective office may not accept from a person, a contribution totaling more than three thousand dollars (\$3,000) per election.
- (b) Except to a candidate for Governor, a person, other than a small contributor committee or political party committee, may not make to a candidate for statewide elective office, and except a candidate for Governor, a candidate for statewide elective office may not accept from a person other than a small contributor committee or a political party committee, a contribution totaling more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per election.
- (c) A person, other than a small contributor committee or political party committee, may not make to a candidate for Governor, and a candidate for Governor may not accept from any person other than a small contributor committee or political party committee, a contribution totaling more than twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) per election.
- (d) (1) A person may not make to a candidate for local elective office, and a candidate for local elective office may not accept from a person, a contribution totaling more than the amount set forth in subdivision (a) per-election. election, as that amount is adjusted by the commission pursuant to Section 83124. This subdivision shall not apply in a jurisdiction in which the local government imposes a limit on contributions pursuant to Section 85702.5.
- (2) This subdivision shall not become operative until January 1, 2018.
- (e) The provisions of this section do not apply to a candidate's contributions of his or her personal funds to his or her own campaign.

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SEC. 8. Section 85305 of the Government Code is amended to read:

- 85305. (a) A candidate for elective state office or committee controlled by that candidate may not make a contribution to any other candidate for elective state office in excess of the limits set forth in subdivision (a) of Section 85301.
- (b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2018, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2018, deletes or extends that date.
- SEC. 9. Section 85305 is added to the Government Code, to read:
- 85305. (a) A candidate for elective office or committee controlled by that candidate may not make a contribution to any other candidate for elective office in excess of the limits set forth in subdivision (a) of Section 85301. This section shall not apply in a jurisdiction in which the local government imposes a limit on contributions pursuant to Section 85702.5.
- (b) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2018. SEC. 10. Section 85306 of the Government Code is amended to read:
- 85306. (a) A candidate may transfer campaign funds from one controlled committee to a controlled committee for elective state office of the same candidate. Contributions transferred shall be attributed to specific contributors using a "last in, first out" or "first in, first out" accounting method, and these attributed contributions when aggregated with all other contributions from the same contributor may not exceed the limits set forth in Section 85301 or 85302.
- (b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), a candidate for elective state office, other than a candidate for statewide elective office, who possesses campaign funds on January 1, 2001, may use those funds to seek elective office without attributing the funds to specific contributors.
- (c) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), a candidate for statewide elective office who possesses campaign funds on November 6, 2002, may use those funds to seek elective office without attributing the funds to specific contributors.
- (d) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2018, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2018, deletes or extends that date.

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SEC. 11. Section 85306 is added to the Government Code, to read:

- 85306. (a) A candidate may transfer campaign funds from one controlled committee to a controlled committee for elective office of the same candidate. Contributions transferred shall be attributed to specific contributors using a "last in, first out" or "first in, first out" accounting method, and these attributed contributions when aggregated with all other contributions from the same contributor may not exceed the limits set forth in Section 85301 or 85302.
- (b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), a candidate for elective state office, other than a candidate for statewide elective office, who possesses campaign funds on January 1, 2001, may use those funds to seek elective office without attributing the funds to specific contributors.
- (c) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), a candidate for statewide elective office who possesses campaign funds on November 6, 2002, may use those funds to seek elective office without attributing the funds to specific contributors.
- (d) This section shall not apply in a jurisdiction in which the local government imposes a limit on contributions pursuant to Section 85702.5.
- (e) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2018. SEC. 12. Section 85307 of the Government Code is amended to read:
- 85307. (a) The provisions of this article regarding loans apply to extensions of credit, but do not apply to loans made to a candidate by a commercial lending institution in the lender's regular course of business on terms available to members of the general public for which the candidate is personally liable.
- (b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), a candidate for elective state office may not personally loan to his or her campaign, including the proceeds of a loan obtained by the candidate from a commercial lending institution, an amount, the outstanding balance of which exceeds one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000). A candidate may not charge interest on any loan he or she made to his or her campaign.
- (c) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2018, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2018, deletes or extends that date.

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SEC. 13. Section 85307 is added to the Government Code, to read:

- 85307. (a) The provisions of this article regarding loans apply to extensions of credit, but do not apply to loans made to a candidate by a commercial lending institution in the lender's regular course of business on terms available to members of the general public for which the candidate is personally liable.
- (b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), a candidate for elective office may not personally loan to his or her campaign, including the proceeds of a loan obtained by the candidate from a commercial lending institution, an amount, the outstanding balance of which exceeds one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000). A candidate may not charge interest on any loan he or she made to his or her campaign. This subdivision shall not apply to a jurisdiction in which the local government imposes a limit on contributions pursuant to Section 85702.5.
- (c) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2018. SEC. 14. Section 85315 of the Government Code is amended to read:
- 85315. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, an elected state officer may establish a committee to oppose the qualification of a recall measure, and the recall election. This committee may be established when the elected state officer receives a notice of intent to recall pursuant to Section 11021 of the Elections Code. An elected state officer may accept campaign contributions to oppose the qualification of a recall measure, and if qualification is successful, the recall election, without regard to the campaign contributions limits set forth in this chapter. The voluntary expenditure limits do not apply to expenditures made to oppose the qualification of a recall measure or to oppose the recall election.
- (b) After the failure of a recall petition or after the recall election, the committee formed by the elected state officer shall wind down its activities and dissolve. Any remaining funds shall be treated as surplus funds and shall be expended within 30 days after the failure of the recall petition or after the recall election for a purpose specified in subdivision (b) of Section 89519.
- (c) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2018, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2018, deletes or extends that date.

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SEC. 15. Section 85315 is added to the Government Code, to read:

- 85315. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, an elected officer may establish a committee to oppose the qualification of a recall measure, and the recall election. This committee may be established when the elected officer receives a notice of intent to recall pursuant to Section 11021 of the Elections Code. An elected officer may accept campaign contributions to oppose the qualification of a recall measure, and if qualification is successful, the recall election, without regard to the campaign contributions limits set forth in this chapter. The voluntary expenditure limits do not apply to expenditures made to oppose the qualification of a recall measure or to oppose the recall election.
- (b) After the failure of a recall petition or after the recall election, the committee formed by the elected officer shall wind down its activities and dissolve. Any remaining funds shall be treated as surplus funds and shall be expended within 30 days after the failure of the recall petition or after the recall election for a purpose specified in subdivision (b) of Section 89519.
- (c) This section shall not apply in a jurisdiction in which the local government imposes a limit on contributions pursuant to Section 85702.5.
- (d) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2018. SEC. 16. Section 85316 of the Government Code is amended to read:
- 85316. (a) Except as provided in subdivision (b), a contribution for an election may be accepted by a candidate for elective state office after the date of the election only to the extent that the contribution does not exceed net debts outstanding from the election, and the contribution does not otherwise exceed the applicable contribution limit for that election.
- (b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), an elected state officer may accept contributions after the date of the election for the purpose of paying expenses associated with holding the office provided that the contributions are not expended for any contribution to any state or local committee. Contributions received pursuant to this subdivision shall be deposited into a bank account established solely for the purposes specified in this subdivision.

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(1) No person shall make, and no elected state officer shall receive from a person, a contribution pursuant to this subdivision totaling more than the following amounts per calendar year:

- (A) Three thousand dollars (\$3,000) in the case of an elected state officer of the Assembly or Senate.
- (B) Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in the case of a statewide elected state officer other than the Governor.
- (C) Twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) in the case of the Governor.
- (2) No elected state officer shall receive contributions pursuant to paragraph (1) that, in the aggregate, total more than the following amounts per calendar year:
- (A) Fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in the case of an elected state officer of the Assembly or Senate.
- (B) One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) in the case of a statewide elected state officer other than the Governor.
- (C) Two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) in the case of the Governor.
- (3) Any contribution received pursuant to this subdivision shall be deemed to be a contribution to that candidate for election to any state office that he or she may seek during the term of office to which he or she is currently elected, including, but not limited to, reelection to the office he or she currently holds, and shall be subject to any applicable contribution limit provided in this title. If a contribution received pursuant to this subdivision exceeds the allowable contribution limit for the office sought, the candidate shall return the amount exceeding the limit to the contributor on a basis to be determined by the Commission. None of the expenditures made by elected state officers pursuant to this subdivision shall be subject to the voluntary expenditure limitations in Section 85400.
- (4) The commission shall adjust the calendar year contribution limitations and aggregate contribution limitations set forth in this subdivision in January of every odd-numbered year to reflect any increase or decrease in the Consumer Price Index. Those adjustments shall be rounded to the nearest one hundred dollars (\$100).
- (c) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2018, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2018, deletes or extends that date.

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SEC. 17. Section 85316 is added to the Government Code, to read:

- 85316. (a) Except as provided in subdivision (b), a contribution for an election may be accepted by a candidate for elective office after the date of the election only to the extent that the contribution does not exceed net debts outstanding from the election, and the contribution does not otherwise exceed the applicable contribution limit for that election.
- (b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), an elected state officer may accept contributions after the date of the election for the purpose of paying expenses associated with holding the office provided that the contributions are not expended for any contribution to any state or local committee. Contributions received pursuant to this subdivision shall be deposited into a bank account established solely for the purposes specified in this subdivision.
- (1) No person shall make, and no elected state officer shall receive from a person, a contribution pursuant to this subdivision totaling more than the following amounts per calendar year:
- (A) Three thousand dollars (\$3,000) in the case of an elected state officer of the Assembly or Senate.
- (B) Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in the case of a statewide elected state officer other than the Governor.
- (C) Twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) in the case of the Governor.
- (2) No elected state officer shall receive contributions pursuant to paragraph (1) that, in the aggregate, total more than the following amounts per calendar year:
- (A) Fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in the case of an elected state officer of the Assembly or Senate.
- (B) One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) in the case of a statewide elected state officer other than the Governor.
- (C) Two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) in the case of the Governor.
- (3) Any contribution received pursuant to this subdivision shall be deemed to be a contribution to that candidate for election to any state office that he or she may seek during the term of office to which he or she is currently elected, including, but not limited to, reelection to the office he or she currently holds, and shall be subject to any applicable contribution limit provided in this title. If a contribution received pursuant to this subdivision exceeds the

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allowable contribution limit for the office sought, the candidate shall return the amount exceeding the limit to the contributor on a basis to be determined by the Commission. None of the expenditures made by elected state officers pursuant to this subdivision shall be subject to the voluntary expenditure limitations in Section 85400.

- (4) The commission shall adjust the calendar year contribution limitations and aggregate contribution limitations set forth in this subdivision in January of every odd-numbered year to reflect any increase or decrease in the Consumer Price Index. Those adjustments shall be rounded to the nearest one hundred dollars (\$100).
- (c) This section shall not apply in a jurisdiction in which the local government imposes a limit on contributions pursuant to Section 85702.5.
- (d) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2018. SEC. 18. Section 85317 of the Government Code is amended to read:
- 85317. (a) Notwithstanding subdivision (a) of Section 85306, a candidate for elective state office may carry over contributions raised in connection with one election for elective state office to pay campaign expenditures incurred in connection with a subsequent election for the same elective state office.
- (b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2018, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2018, deletes or extends that date.
- SEC. 19. Section 85317 is added to the Government Code, to read:
- 85317. (a) Notwithstanding subdivision (a) of Section 85306, a candidate for elective office may carry over contributions raised in connection with one election for elective office to pay campaign expenditures incurred in connection with a subsequent election for the same elective office. This section shall not apply in a jurisdiction in which the local government imposes a limit on contributions pursuant to Section 85702.5.
- (b) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2018.
- SEC. 20. Section 85318 of the Government Code is amended to read:
- 39 85318. (a) A candidate for elective state office may raise 40 contributions for a general election prior to the primary election,

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1 and for a special general election prior to a special primary election, 2 for the same elective state office if the candidate sets aside these 3 contributions and uses these contributions for the general election 4 or special general election. If the candidate for elective state office 5 is defeated in the primary election or special primary election, or 6 otherwise withdraws from the general election or special general 7 election, the general election or special general election funds shall 8 be refunded to the contributors on a pro rata basis less any expenses associated with the raising and administration of general election 10 or special general election contributions. Notwithstanding Section 11 85201, candidates for elective state office may establish separate 12 campaign contribution accounts for the primary and general 13 elections or special primary and special general elections.

(b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2018, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2018, deletes or extends that date.

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- SEC. 21. Section 85318 is added to the Government Code, to read:
- 85318. (a) A candidate for elective office may raise contributions for a general election prior to the primary election, and for a special general election prior to a special primary election, for the same elective office if the candidate sets aside these contributions and uses these contributions for the general election or special general election. If the candidate for elective office is defeated in the primary election or special primary election, or otherwise withdraws from the general election or special general election, the general election or special general election funds shall be refunded to the contributors on a pro rata basis less any expenses associated with the raising and administration of general election or special general election contributions. Notwithstanding Section 85201, candidates for elective office may establish separate campaign contribution accounts for the primary and general elections or special primary and special general elections.
- 34 (b) This section shall not apply in a jurisdiction in which the 35 local government imposes a limit on contributions pursuant to 36 Section 85702.5.
- 37 (c) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2018.
- 38 SEC. 22. Section 85702.5 is added to the Government Code, to read:

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85702.5. (a) A local government agency may, by ordinance or resolution, impose a limit on contributions to a candidate for local elective office that is different from the limit set forth in subdivision (d) of Section 85301. The limitation may also be imposed by means of a local initiative measure.

- (b) A local government agency that establishes a contribution limit pursuant to subdivision (a) may adopt enforcement standards for a violation of that limit, which may include administrative, civil, or criminal penalties.
- (c) The commission shall not be responsible for the administration or enforcement of a contribution limit adopted pursuant to subdivision (a).
- (d) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2018. A local government agency's limit on contributions to a candidate for local elective office that is in effect on the operative date of this section shall be deemed to be a limit imposed pursuant to subdivision (a).
- SEC. 23. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIIIB of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIIIB of the California Constitution.
- SEC. 24. The Legislature finds and declares that this bill furthers the purposes of the Political Reform Act of 1974 within the meaning of subdivision (a) of Section 81012 of the Government Code.