



PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

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July 18, 2013

To: Members, Washington State Public Disclosure Commission
From: Andrea McNamara Doyle, Executive Director
Subject: Personal Financial Disclosure Statement (Form F-1) Discussion

Agenda Item

For the July 25 meeting, Staff is compiling F-1 background information to be used when the Commission discusses modernizing the F-1 reporting and modification requirements during the August retreat. The packet will include:

- Annotated F-1 and F-1A forms showing the authority for each section;
- RCW 42.17A.700-.715 (formerly RCW 42.17.240-.242);
- Legislative history of the personal financial affairs reporting requirements in Washington;
- Chapter 390-24 WAC;
- F-1 filer instructions; and
- Recent news articles related to personal financial affairs disclosure issues.

These packets will be available at the July meeting in the event that the Commission wishes to identify and develop specific discussion topics to focus on during the retreat. Lori Anderson will walk through the annotated F-1 form and highlight areas that have been suggested for amendments.

Possible topics in response to **filers'** suggestions for streamlining the process are:

- Creating a "mini F-1" for positions with limited or no financial authority;
- Waiving or simplifying the reporting requirement for short-term stock holdings;
- Limiting required disclosures about involvement with business/commercial entities to only those doing business in Washington State (similar to real estate holdings).

The **media** has suggested:

- Adding additional dollar codes beyond "Code E - \$100,000 or more."

Staff resources could be better managed by:

- Changes to the annual filing deadline such as
 - Moving the annual April 15 due date to June to better coincide with candidate filing requirements;
 - Staggering the due dates of annual reports so that state and local officials have different filing deadlines; and/or

- Making the annual statement a biennial statement and stagger the years when state and local officials file.

The public, including the media, has often suggested that the filed F-1 reports should be available online. Attached is a recent comment letter advocating that the Commission post the F-1 reports on its website. It is also likely individuals may attend the July meeting to lobby for online access to the F-1 reports.

The F-1 background information will be provided to you in electronic format after the July meeting along with any additional items identified during the July meeting discussion that would be helpful to your August retreat discussions.

Enclosure: Comment letter

July 12, 2013

Dear Public Disclosure Commission of Washington,

My name is Harrison Wills, and I am a student studying politics and journalism at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington. I am writing you today to encourage you to consider the benefit of providing the public with direct and efficient access to officials' F1 forms online.

With this issue you have the opportunity to create a model of 21st century government transparency. This would save time and resources, as the current outdated model requires PDC staff to respond to countless phone calls and emails, track down PDFs and scan, email, fax or mail the F1 forms. This way PDC staff could devote more of their time on other necessary issues as they arise.

Will Washington lead the way to transparency and ethics reforms? We live in an age where the general public can research and find just about everything on the internet, and yet critical information about public officials is missing.

I have had several lengthy discussions with PDC staff and they have been incredibly helpful and informative. The CPD staff even agreed that placing this information online would be a win-win situation.

According to the State Integrity Project, Washington State is currently ranked third in the country for government transparency. While this is very impressive, one of the lower scores was for "efficient access to public records." Adding these F1 forms online would improve this measure while also cultivating wide public support for Washington officials.

In short, placing F1 forms online would increase in civic awareness and engagement, cultivate positive press, improve transparency rankings, and create a model of government transparency for the rest of the country to emulate.

Here are two valuable state government transparency studies conducted by the Center for Public Integrity, Global Integrity and Public Radio International.

http://www.stateintegrity.org/washington_survey_public_access_to_information

<http://www.stateintegrity.org/washington>

Thank you for hearing my request. Feel free to contact me at anytime with questions.

Sincerely,
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