

# AB 700 Speaker FAQ

*Be sure to study the normal AB 700 FAQ, also. These are answers to questions that aren't on it.*

## **Q: Didn't SB 27 (Correa) from 2014 take care of exposing Dark Money?**

A: SB 27 requires nonprofits that spend \$50,000 or more in California campaigns to become campaign committees and report the donors who gave the money to the Secretary of State. It also requires the FPPC's website to list the top 10 contributors of committees that raise \$1 million for an election. Both are very important, but it doesn't follow the money and put the information together to ensure the lists show the true funders, nor does it change disclosure on political ads.

So with an SB 27 in place, an enterprising reporter could dig through and find out that committee B gave to committee A, then look up committee B to see who gave to them, and so on down through all the layers, but most people will never do that.

## **Q. What about SB 844 (Pavley) from 2014?**

SB 844 requires the Secretary of State to publish the FPPC's lists of the top 10 funders for and against each ballot measure and tell people in the ballot pamphlet where to find it. But because it uses the lists created by the FPPC for SB 27, it doesn't follow the money either, so the top 10 funders on the website can be misleading committee names.

## **Q. Why didn't SB 52 (Leno-Hill) pass last year?**

SB 52 came very close to passing last year after it passed the Senate and then all its Assembly committees. Unfortunately, some in California labor said they opposed the parts of the bill that had the Fair Political Practices Commission come up with the rules that committees would need to follow the money so the ads have to show the actual original funders rather than front groups. They said they were concerned it would cost too much and be too difficult to do in the heat of a campaign.

## **Q. How are you addressing labor's concerns?**

We've proposed language that addresses concerns about costs and burdens for committees by building on last year's SB 27 (Correa) to have the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) — not committees — identify the top 10 true funders using standardized rules. Ads would show the top 2 or 3 funders.

So funders disclosed aren't misleading front groups, the FPPC must ensure funders listed in its top 10 lists are only individuals, corporations, unions, trade associations, or committees whose contributions are made up almost entirely of smaller donations. The FPPC would only use data it and the Secretary of State already have.

Committees will not have to spend one extra penny on accounting or compliance under this proposal, because their ads would simply show the top three funders from the FPPC's top 10 lists. In fact, AB 700 could save committees money because some top 10 tracking they currently do won't be needed anymore.

## **Q: Can I read the bill language now?**

A: Currently A.B. 700 is a spot bill, meaning that it states the intent of the bill but does not have the full language. Details are still being negotiated with stakeholders. Language might be ready before the Assembly votes but it doesn't need to be. It would most likely be in print in time for the Senate Elections Committee in June or July.

The spot language says: "It is the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that would implement a California Disclose Act to ensure that advertisements that seek to persuade voters to cast a vote in favor or against ballot measures do not mislead voters as to who is funding the campaign that paid for the advertisement."

## **Q: Are you sure you can pass it this year?**

The need for the *DISCLOSE Act* is clearer now than ever. The Koch brothers pledge to spend nearly \$900 million on the 2016 election is making clear to everybody that there's no way that even labor unions can compete with corporations and billionaires. The *DISCLOSE Act* is one real solution we can pass before Citizens United is overturned. So we expect more support and a stronger grassroots coalition than ever before — especially with the help of people like you.