



AB 220 (Bonta) – Campaign Funds for Child Care

(As Introduced January 16, 2019)

SUMMARY

AB 220 would authorize the use of campaign funds to pay for child care expenses resulting from a candidate or officeholder engaging in campaign activities.

BACKGROUND

In 2018, the Federal Election Commission (FEC) took action to allow campaign funds to be used for child care expenses for federal candidates running for office. However, the vast majority of candidates in California seek municipal, local, county, or state offices. The action taken by the FEC does not apply to these non-federal candidates.

California's campaign finance law allows candidates to use campaign funds for expenses like parking fines, home security systems and specialty clothes but not for child care. The California Fair Political Practices Commission issued a manual that provides guidelines on the use of campaign funds which includes child care expenses at a maximum of \$200 per event. However, there is no statute in California or official ruling allowing candidates to use campaign funds for child care purposes. That means any person who attempts to use campaign funds for child care expenses has no statutory protection and would be relying on a manual which does not carry the weight of law.

THE NEED FOR THE BILL

Candidates with young children, men and women, often face the practical reality of paying for increased child care to campaign and network when running for office. In the California State Legislature, women make up 30% of legislators. At

the city level, women hold 31% of elected seats, which is still well below gender parity. In California's 10 largest cities, only Oakland and San Francisco currently have female mayors. The campaign finance law must change if gender parity is to be achieved.

There are many ways to help bring about more parity. By amending the Political Reform Act of 1974, California can make our office holders more reflective of our electorate. Parents of young children bring an important perspective to policy-making and should be encouraged to enter the political arena and serve.

SOLUTION

AB 220 would help create greater gender parity among elected officials in California and more broadly help all parents with young children seek public office by allowing the use of campaign funds for child care expenses. It would specifically amend the Political Reform Act of 1974 to expressly allow campaign funds to be used for child care by those who choose to run for elected offices in California.

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