

OPLA RESEARCH REQUEST MEMO

To: Janet Stocco, Legislative Analyst, VLA Committee

From: Kristin Brawn, Legislative Researcher

Date: April 26, 2021

RE: Leadership Political Action Committees in the New England States (LD 1125 and LD 1417)

Hi Janet,

You asked me to research if other New England states defined leadership political action committees (PACs) in their statutes. In my research, I have found two states, Connecticut and Vermont, that have laws regarding legislative leadership PACs. Below is an overview of each state's statutes, with hyperlinks to the applicable statutes, as well as links to campaign financing guides published by the campaign financing authorities in each state.

Connecticut

Definition – Connecticut statute ([Conn. Gen. Stat. §9-605](#)) authorizes the following individuals in positions of legislative leadership to establish a legislative leadership committee:

- The speaker of the House of Representatives, majority leader of the House of Representatives, president pro tempore of the Senate and majority leader of the Senate may each establish a single legislative leadership committee.
- The minority leader of the House of Representatives and the minority leader of the Senate may each establish two legislative leadership committees.
- The majority leaders-elect and minority leaders-elect of the House of Representatives and Senate may each establish a legislative leadership committee, provided any other leadership committee for the same leadership position held by an individual who is leaving that leadership position declines to accept contributions and the legislative leadership committee for the leader-elect does not accept contributions for the remainder of the calendar year that would otherwise be prohibited by statute.

The chairperson of each leadership committee must certify the designation of the committee as a legislative leadership committee and file the certification, along with a statement of organization. Each committee must be identified in the designation by the General Assembly leader who establishes the committee. A legislative leadership committee is not subject to the limitation on the establishment or control of one political committee by any individual.

Authorized Expenditures – In addition to other expenditures allowed for political committees, statute ([§9-607](#)) also allows a legislative leadership committee to expend funds to defray costs for conducting legislative or constituency-related business which are not reimbursed or paid by the state.

Contributions – [Section 9-610](#) places restrictions on contributions and solicitations from communicator lobbyists to legislative leadership committees. Contributions are limited to \$100. Sections [9-617](#), [9-618](#) and [9-619](#) specify other limitations on contributions to and from legislative leadership committees and outline exemptions for certain contributions that apply to legislative leadership committees.

Other Provisions – [Section 9-675](#) requires legislative leadership committees to file financial disclosure statements; and [§9-718](#) places specific limitations and prohibitions on the contributions of legislative leadership committees on behalf of Citizen's Election Program candidates.

Links to Connecticut PAC [campaign financing guidebook](#) and [addendum](#).

Vermont

Definition – Vermont statute ([17 VSA §2901, sub-§19](#)) defines a “legislative leadership political committee” as a political committee established by or on behalf of a political party caucus within a chamber of the General Assembly.

Registration – Statute ([17 VSA §2922](#)) requires a political committee, including a legislative leadership political committee, to register with the Secretary of State within 10 days of making expenditures of \$ 1,000 or more and accepting contributions of \$ 1,000 or more. The political committee must state its full name and address; the name and address of the bank in which it maintains its campaign checking account; and the name and address of the treasurer responsible for maintaining the checking account. In addition, a legislative leadership political committee must designate in its registration that it is established as a legislative leadership political committee. The Secretary of State must provide on his or her website a list of all legislative leadership political committees that have been designated.

Contributions – [2 VSA §266](#) prohibits a legislative leadership political committee from soliciting a contribution from a registered lobbyist, a registered employer, or a lobbying firm engaged by an employer. A registered lobbyist, registered employer, or a lobbying firm engaged by an employer may not make or promise a contribution to a legislative leadership political committee while the General Assembly is in session, until adjournment sine die.

Link to Vermont PAC [campaign financing guidebook](#).