

ALEC EXPOSED

"ALEC" has long been a secretive collaboration between Big Business and "conservative" politicians. Behind closed doors, they ghostwrite "model" bills to be introduced in state capitols across the country. This agenda-underwritten by global corporations- includes major tax loopholes for big industries and the super rich, proposals to offshore U.S. jobs and gut minimum wage, and efforts to weaken public health, safety, and environmental protections. Although many of these bills have become law, until now, their origin has been largely unknown. With ALEC EXPOSED, the Center for Media and Democracy hopes more Americans will study the bills to understand the depth and breadth of how big corporations are changing the legal rules and undermining democracy across the nation.

ALEC's Corporate Board --in recent past or present

- AT&T Services, Inc.
• centerpoint360
• UPS
• Bayer Corporation
• GlaxoSmithKline
• Energy Future Holdings
• Johnson & Johnson
• Coca-Cola Company
• PhRMA
• Kraft Foods, Inc.
• Coca-Cola Co.
• Pfizer Inc.
• Reed Elsevier, Inc.
• DIAGEO
• Peabody Energy
• Intuit, Inc.
• Koch Industries, Inc.
• ExxonMobil
• Verizon
• Reynolds American Inc.
• Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
• Salt River Project
• Altria Client Services, Inc.
• American Bail Coalition
• State Farm Insurance

For more on these corporations, search at www.SourceWatch.org.

DID YOU KNOW? Corporations VOTED to adopt this. Through ALEC, global companies work as "equals" in "unison" with politicians to write laws to govern your life. Big Business has "a VOICE and a VOTE," according to newly exposed documents. DO YOU?

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An Act Relating to Requiring a 72-Hour Budget "Timeout" Prior to Hearings or Votes on Appropriation and Revenue Bills

Model Language

Did you know that the Evergreen Freedom Foundation--which is connected to the Kochs--was the corporate co-chair in 2011?"

Intent Section

The Legislature finds that public participation in the legislative process improves the quality of proposed legislation by allowing the opportunity for its detailed review by interested parties. The opportunity for a detailed review by the public prior to hearings or votes on legislation helps increase public trust in government and enhances respect for the Legislature by ensuring that its operation is conducted with the openness, order, and dignity befitting [insert state]. It is the intent of the Legislature, therefore, to prohibit hearings or votes on appropriation and/or revenue related bills until 72 hours after the bill's public introduction.

Short Title

This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "72-Hour Budget Review Act."

Definitions

- (1) "Appropriation related bill" means any bill authorizing an appropriation of funds for state operating, capital or transportation expenses.
(2) "Revenue related bill" means any bill raising revenue for operating, capital or transportation expenses.
(3) "Amendment" means any proposed change in a bill.
(4) "Striking amendment" means any amendment removing everything after the title of a bill and inserting a whole new bill.
(5) "Publicly available" means posting a bill on the Legislature's website and its publication in a bill report, committee report, and/or conference report.
(6) "Shall" means the obligation or duty to perform; no discretion is granted.

Hearings or votes prohibited for 72 hours

Hearings or votes on appropriation and/or revenue related bills shall be prohibited until 72 hours after the bill is made publicly available. The 72-hour time period excludes Saturdays, Sundays and holidays except when the legislative body considering the bill is in session on such a day.

Amendments

Amendments offered to appropriation and/or revenue related bills shall not be considered in order unless made publicly available 24 hours prior to any vote. The 24-hour time period excludes Saturdays, Sundays and holidays except when the legislative body considering the bill is in session on such a day.

Striking amendments shall not be considered in order unless made publicly available 48 hours prior to any vote. The 48-hour time period excludes Saturdays, Sundays and holidays except when the legislative body considering the bill is in session on such a day.

Act's applicability to multiple stages of bill consideration

The time sensitive prohibitions of this Act shall apply each time a new version of an appropriation and/or revenue related bill is considered. This includes consideration of conference recommendations.

Exemptions

The time sensitive prohibitions of this Act for hearings or votes shall be waived upon a two-thirds vote of the full committee or legislative body considering the appropriation and/or revenue related bill. For bills adopted utilizing this exemption, the following section shall be added to the text of the bill and the bill report:

"The (insert legislative body/committee) has waived the people's right for a detailed review of this bill as required by the '72-Hour Budget Review Act.'"

Center for Media and Democracy's quick summary

According to the March 2009 "Inside ALEC" newsletter (available here: <http://www.alec.org/am/pdf/InsideALEC/InsideALECMarch2009.pdf>), "ALEC's Tax and Fiscal Policy Task Force adopted the 72-Hour Budget Review Act... at the 2007 Annual Meeting" (July 25-29, 2007 in Philadelphia, PA) and, in March 2009, members of the task force were still "follow[ing] its legislative process across the nation."

This act would require a 72-hour time-out between introduction of an appropriations bill or revenue-related bill and a hearing or vote on such legislation as well as 24 hours between introduction of an amendment to such legislation and a vote on the amendment, except for a 48-hour timeout between the public posting of a "striking" amendment (or "substitute amendment" in WI parlance). It provides that these restrictions may be waived by a two-thirds vote of the committee or legislative body that is scheduled to vote on the measure.

A bill by this name was introduced and sent to committee in Illinois in February 2010, in Washington state in January and March 2010 and in Michigan in March 2008.

While ALEC may endorse this legislation, Wisconsin Republicans, who rushed a "budget repair bill" through the State Senate in under two hours in March 2011, clearly do not.

About Us and ALEC EXPOSED. The Center for Media and Democracy reports on corporate spin and government propaganda. We are located in Madison, Wisconsin, and publish www.PRWatch.org, www.SourceWatch.org, and now www.ALECexposed.org. For more information contact: editor@prwatch.org or 608-260-9713.