

State Elections Enforcement Commission

Citizens' Election Program



Press Release

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STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION ANNOUNCES SECOND PUBLIC GRANTS OF ELECTION SEASON

HARTFORD, CT – June 2, 2016 – The State Elections Enforcement Commission (the “Commission”) announced that it will make its second public grant payments under the Citizens’ Election Program (“CEP”) for the August 9, 2016 primaries and the November 8, 2016 general election. The Commission determined that state representative candidates Saud Anwar (D – 14th District), Joseph Diminico (D – 13th District), Susan Eastwood (D – 53rd District), Michael Ferguson (R – 138th District), John Fusco (R – 81st District), Linda Gentile (D – 104th District), Minnie Gonzalez (D – 3rd District), Gregory Haddad (D – 54th District), John Hampton (D – 16th District), Stephen Harding (R – 107th District), Themis Klarides (R – 114th District), Emanuela Palmares (R – 110th District), David Yaccarino (R – 87th District), and Tami Zawistowski (R – 61st District) were eligible to receive Program grants. The Commission also determined that state senate candidate Bob Duff (D – 25th District) was eligible to receive a Program grant.

The CEP is a voluntary program which allows qualifying candidates for General Assembly and statewide offices to receive full public financing. To qualify for public campaign financing, candidates must demonstrate they have substantial support from the public. Candidates for state representative accomplish this by raising \$5,000 from at least 150 individuals residing in municipalities in their district. Candidates for state senate accomplish this by raising \$15,000 from at least 300 individuals residing in municipalities in their district. Participating candidates may only accept small dollar contributions from certain individuals—the maximum contribution is \$100—and no contributions from state contractors or PACs. In 2016, general election grant amounts are \$28,150 for state representative candidates and \$95,710 for state senate candidates. The Commission will be accepting applications from candidates in primaries until July 15th and from candidates in the general election until October 14th.

Since it was enacted, the CEP has considerably altered the electoral process. The CEP set off a sweeping change in the way candidates raise campaign funds by reducing the influence of large contributions and shifting the goals of campaign fundraising towards small dollar contributions from actual people, rather than special interests. Candidates no longer require access to personal wealth or the support of special interests, like state contractors, lobbyists, businesses, unions or PACs. Today, Connecticut candidates can mount successful campaigns solely relying on the support of individuals in their community. Now in its fifth full election cycle, the CEP represents an important effort to restore the public’s trust in the institutions of democratic governance.