

# State Elections Enforcement Commission

## Citizens' Election Program



Press Release

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### COMMISSION AWARDS SIXTEEN MORE PUBLIC GRANTS TO PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES

HARTFORD, CT – June 13, 2012 – The State Elections Enforcement Commission (the “Commission”) today awarded sixteen public grant payments under the Citizens’ Election Program (the “Program” or “CEP”) for the upcoming August primaries and November election. The Commission determined that state representative candidates Alfred Adinolfi (R – 103<sup>rd</sup> District), James Albis (D – 99<sup>th</sup> District), David Baram (D – 15<sup>th</sup> District), Jason Bowsza (D – 57<sup>th</sup> District), Charity Folk (R – 16<sup>th</sup> District), Gail Lavielle (R – 143<sup>rd</sup> District), Charles Marsella (D – 80<sup>th</sup> District), Russell Morin (D – 28<sup>th</sup> District), Dennis Odle (R – 73<sup>rd</sup> District), Pamela Staneski (R – 119<sup>th</sup> District), Michael Renzullo (D – 63<sup>rd</sup> District), Matthew Ritter (D – 1<sup>st</sup> District), Hilda Santiago (D – 84<sup>th</sup> District), Mark Tweedie (R – 13<sup>th</sup> District), and David Yaccarino (R – 87<sup>th</sup> District) were eligible to receive Program grants. The Commission also determined that state senate candidate Cynthia Cartier (R– 13<sup>th</sup> District) was eligible to receive a Program grant.

Many of the campaigns awarded grants today took advantage of the Commission’s early review process, in which audit staff pre-screen contributions for qualifying status, and also used the electronic filing system (eCRIS) to submit their disclosure statements. The Commission has found that taking advantage of early review greatly increases a committee’s likelihood of avoiding grant application continuances and delays in the release of grant monies. Grant applications accompanied by electronic filings also streamline the grant review process. The Commission strongly urges committees to use the early review process and eCRIS.

Grant amounts vary. Typically, primary grant amounts are \$10,740 for state representative candidates and \$37,590 for state senate candidates, but amounts are higher if the candidates run in districts where one major party has a large advantage in the number of electors registered with that party. In most races, general election grant amounts are \$26,850 for state representative candidates and \$91,290 for state senate candidates.

The Citizens’ Election Program is a revolutionary program that allows qualifying candidates for General Assembly to receive full public financing. To qualify for public financing, candidates must demonstrate they have sufficient support from the public. Participating candidates may only accept small dollar contributions from certain individuals—the maximum contribution is \$100—and no contributions from state contractors or PACs. The CEP was designed, in part, to reduce the influence of special interests in state politics, and it has done so to a remarkable degree in just two full election cycles. As the SEEC, struggling with staff reductions and a reduced budget, begins its third cycle of administering the voluntary Program, the CEP continues to provide a seawall against the rising tide of special interest money in today’s elections.

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