

# State Elections Enforcement Commission



## Press Release

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### **STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION ANNOUNCES PASSAGE OF MUNICIPAL PILOT PROGRAM FOR CAMPAIGN FINANCE FILINGS**

HARTFORD, CT – July 1, 2015 – Special Act 15-14, “*An Act Establishing a Pilot Program for Municipal Campaign Finance Filings*” was signed into law by the Governor on June 30. The new law authorizes the State Elections Enforcement Commission (“SEEC”) to establish a pilot program to assist the town clerks of up to twenty cities or towns by serving as the filing repository for all campaign finance filings.

“This law will lead to overall significant savings at the municipal level in both time and resources as the SEEC will be utilizing the existing eCRIS filing system to perform filing disclosure and compliance duties for municipal offices,” said Michael J. Brandi, Executive Director and General Counsel of the Commission. “We are very pleased that the General Assembly has passed this legislation and that the Governor has signed it into law.”

The eCRIS system, already developed for Statewide and General Assembly races, will now be available at a municipal level, for the pilot participants. Because this system has already been designed and implemented, this program expands its usefulness to allow for savings at a municipal level with better disclosure. Should the pilot program be successful and adopted on a statewide basis, relatively minimal personnel resources at the state level would be necessary to effect staff and monetary savings for 169 towns and cities.

This proposal creates a pilot program whereby the Commission will perform filing repository duties for the offices of up to twenty municipal town clerks. Presently, town clerks are the filing repositories for all municipal campaign finance filings, including those for municipal candidates and referenda. The pilot program will significantly increase public disclosure of local campaign filings as they will be available online for the first time, and it will increase consistency in compliance and support for local candidates. The proposal mandates a study of the pilot program’s efficiencies to determine whether the Commission should assume these filing duties for all municipalities in the future.

“Taking on the role of filing repository for municipalities will be cost-effective and provide a significant improvement in meaningful disclosure,” said Brandi. “This program will allow towns to utilize the SEEC’s electronic filing system in the same capacity that all party committees, General Assembly campaigns and statewide campaigns already do. The public will have instant access to campaign finance reporting.”

The Commission is currently developing an application process for interested cities and towns.

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