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HB 5505 AN ACT CONCERNING THE CITIZEN'S ELECTION PROGRAM

Good morning Chairman Caruso, Chairman Slossberg and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee, my name is Bill Jenkins and I am here to talk about HB 5505 An Act Concerning the Citizens's Election Program. Presently, I am a treasurer for two political committees organized by two or more individuals, a deputy treasurer for another and I am the treasurer for State Representative Mike Alberts' 2008 candidate committee. I have been serving as a treasurer for 12 years for quite a number of campaigns and political committees over the years. I also serve as the Registrar of Voters in Chaplin.

I strongly oppose Section 16 which would require ALL candidate committees to file all of their financial disclosure statements electronically. This system is brand new this year and its reliability and ease for treasurers like me has yet to be tested. The SEEC claims to offer "training" for this system as currently required by CGS 9-675(a) however they have yet to offer this training during nights or weekends for treasurers like me and MANY others who have full-time jobs and cannot attend their training that is at this point only offered during regular work hours. I have been using the SOTS's on-line voter registration system for almost three years and during times of high use or demand, it seems that more often than not, they system is "down" or "unavailable." No one has ever offered an explanation as to why this constantly happens but the SOTS's office usually points the finger at DOIT. I can almost guarantee you that on the day that the filings are due there will be SEVERAL HUNDREDS of treasurers trying to file their statements at the last minute and I have no confidence that the system will be available for them. When the CONNverse system is down, it's annoying but us Registrars can enter our data whenever the system comes back up but if a treasurer cannot file his statement before midnight on the 10th of the month, they will get FINED \$100.00 and there is no way the SEEC can vacate this fine.

The bottom line is please DO NOT force ALL TREASURERS to use a system this year that is brand new and completely unproven. I might suggest that you consider passing legislation that would require that the SEEC conduct a study and analysis of how their new system works this year for the few who are using it on a volunteer basis and have the SEEC report back to you NEXT YEAR. This way, you will have something to go on before you consider making such a major change as this one.

I also **oppose Section 18** where this legislation adds language to 9-706(b)(5) requiring campaign committee treasurers to "maintain and furnish all records required pursuant to chapters 155 and 157." First off, nothing in Chapter 155 currently requires me to make a copy of any check or money order nor does it require me to have the contributor sign any "certification" if their contribution is \$50.00 or less. The SEEC is already trying to force

treasurers to submit more documentation than is required by current law for no real good reason. We are already required to submit and extremely detailed disclosure statements but for some reason, the SEEC doesn't think this is good enough. During the grant application process, they demand additional back up documentation which as I mentioned, is not presently required by current law nor should it be. Current law already REQUIRES us treasurers to comply with Chapters 155 & 157 and if it's determined that we violated the law, will be fined by the SEEC. I simply see no need for this change to 9-706(b)(5).

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