



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

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***TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION  
AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE***

*March 17, 2014*

*Statement of Michael J. Brandi, Executive Director and General Counsel  
State Elections Enforcement Commission*

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**The State Elections Enforcement Commission provides the following written testimony concerning campaign finance bills on the Committee's agenda today.**

**Senate Bill No. 451- An Act Concerning Government Administration, State Contracting, Regional School Boards and the State Elections Enforcement Commission.**

Like Senate Bill No. 455, Section 20 of Senate Bill No. 451 also seeks to ensure sufficiency of the Citizens' Election Fund by creating a reserve account from which the Commission can make grant payments should there be insufficient funds in the Citizens' Election Fund.

We support this section of the bill to the extent that it would ensure the continued viability of the program; but note that it presents a less desirable approach than that taken in Senate Bill No. 455 as it provides for a set amount of funds to be deposited into the reserve account. Senate Bill No. 455 provides a more permanent solution by guaranteeing the payment of all grants of qualified committees.

**House Bill No. 5549 – An Act Concerning Violations by State Contractors or Prospective State Contractors of Campaign Contribution Laws.**

The Commission strongly supports House Bill No. 5549 and any other efforts to increase the penalty for violations of the state contractor provisions.

**House Bill No. 5552 - An Act Concerning Slate Committees**

The Commission also supports House Bill No. 5552 with one minor technical change. This bill reclassifies slate committees as their own type of committee rather than as a type of durational political committee. Under existing law, slate committees could not receive the benefit of town committee organization expenditures. This bill remedies that issue.

In addition, this bill re-sets the contribution limits for slate committees to make them more like those imposed on candidate committees. Under existing law, slate committees are subject to a single individual contribution limit of \$1000 for the calendar year. Municipal candidate committees for chief executive officer may receive \$1000 per individual while the limit for all other municipal offices is \$250. These limits for candidate committees apply separately to the primary and general election. This bill treats the new slate committees like candidate committees subjecting them to an individual contribution limit of \$2000 applicable separately to primaries and elections.

The bill has a minor technical error in that it retains the exemption in General Statutes § 9-604 (b) which would permit a slate of candidates to be funded solely by a durational political committee. Because this bill eliminates such political committees and instead creates a new class of slate committees, this language should be removed.

Thank you for your consideration of the Commission's views on these bills.