

March 27, 2015 * 11:00am * 2D

Testimony in support of Proposed HB 5351, An Act Concerning Campaign Consultants.

Dear Senator Cassano, Representative Jutila, Senator McLachlan and Representative Smith, and other distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of *HB 5351, An Act Concerning Campaign Consultants.*

As I cannot be present in Hartford today, please accept my written testimony.

My name is Steven Juskiewicz, and I am a Connecticut resident residing in the town of Ledyard. I am familiar with the Citizen's Election Fund (CEF) and other campaign finance regulations and statutes based on my experience having served over the past seven years as the Treasurer or Deputy Treasurer for a Town Mayoral election as well as three State House and one State Senate races. All four of the legislature campaigns were conducted using the Connecticut CEF. In addition; I am the Treasurer for the Ledyard Republican Town Committee.

My understanding is that the CEF was established to help remove special interests from having excessive influence on state elections and to promote better transparency of the election funding process.

During the election season, Treasurers are required to make detailed periodic reports that become public record and are available on the State Election Enforcement Commission (SEEC) Website. During the election, I reviewed reports filed by many candidates and have recently read articles in print media that detail the practice by some campaign committees for the use of campaign consultants that are paid the vast majority of the committee's allocated CEF funds. As Treasurer, I can state that my candidate committee spent less than 5% of our CEF funds on such consultants.

In the cases of committees that have used most of their CEF funds on consultants that in turn provide professional services, purchase advertising and other items on behalf of the candidate committees, I feel that while permitted by law, the intent of the Citizen's Election Fund Program has been lost along the way.

I strongly support changes to the Citizen's Election Fund Program that promote greater transparency in the election process during the election through useful filing, not just in post-election audits by the SEEC. As a campaign treasurer, I can assure you that although this requires extra work for those treasurers and deputy treasurers that extensively contract with consultants, the use of taxpayer funds through the CEF makes such changes both reasonable and fair to the taxpayers and voters.

Thank-you,

Steven Juskiewicz

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