



Testimony, SB 1126, AAC Revisions to Campaign Finance Laws, March 27, 2015

My name is Sal Luciano. I am the executive director of Council 4 AFSCME, a union of 32,000 private and public employees. I am also the co-chairman of the Connecticut Working Families Party.

Council 4 is concerned about two sections of SB 1126: 20 and 21. These sections change the nominating and endorsement deadlines for any candidate using the Citizen's Election Program. These sections would require minor parties to endorse far earlier than is currently required. We would have to endorse by early June instead of early September. Most of our candidates are working people, middle and lower income. They have to use the Citizen Election Program to have any chance at running a viable campaign – particularly in light of the "Citizens United" decision and the flood of corporate money into our electoral system.

Also, this language would shave two months from the current signature collection time line. Collecting signatures is a labor intensive and time consuming process. Denying third party candidates two months to gather signatures is unfair. In a time when far too few of our citizens vote, these new constraints on minor parties are moving the process in the wrong direction.

There is much to praise in the underlying bill in terms of creating more transparency, but as written, sections 20 and 21 make it a bill that goes in the wrong direction.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions.