



QUESTIONS FOR STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION NOMINEE

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STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION (CGS §§ 9-7A TO 9-7C)

- The State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) is responsible for administering and enforcing the state's public financing program, the Citizens' Election Program (CEP). It also investigates possible violations of election laws, inspects campaign finance records and reports, refers evidence of violations to the chief state's attorney or the attorney general, levies civil penalties for elections violations, issues advisory opinions, and makes recommendations to the General Assembly concerning revisions to the state's election laws.
- SEEC consists of five members who serve three-year, staggered terms. The governor and the four top legislative leaders each appoint one member. No more than two may belong to the same political party, and at least one must not be affiliated with any political party. Both houses of the General Assembly confirm. Members cannot serve more than two consecutive terms.
- The commission elects one of its members to serve as chairperson and another to serve as vice-chairperson. It can employ individuals necessary to perform its functions.
- The commission is a division within the Office of Government Accountability (OGA) but has independent decision-making authority.



QUESTIONS

1. What are the most significant challenges currently facing the commission? How does it plan to address them?
2. SEEC and the Office of the Secretary of the State both play a role in election administration. Are there opportunities for the agencies to collaborate? Do you believe election-related duties and responsibilities are appropriately divided between the agencies? Should either agency's authority be expanded or narrowed? Please explain further.
3. SEEC is one of nine divisions within OGA, which was established in 2011. What are the benefits of being within OGA? What are the challenges? In what ways could the challenges be addressed?
4. What impact has the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision had on Connecticut elections?
5. The 2016 election is the fifth legislative election since the CEP was implemented. What are the program's goals? In your opinion, has the program met these goals? Do you have any recommended changes?
6. In recent years, the legislature has considered proposals to reduce the size of the grants awarded under the CEP. In your opinion, are the grants too high, too low, or are they the right amount? Please explain further.
7. In 2014, the commission adopted Advisory Opinion 2014-01, which addresses activities by state party committees' federal accounts. What are the opinion's key points? Please identify federal account activities that the state can regulate and those that it cannot because of federal preemption.
8. The legislature last addressed independent expenditure reporting requirements in PA 13-180. Do you feel that any changes are needed to these requirements? If so, what are they?
9. SA 15-14 allows SEEC to establish a pilot program to assist town clerks in up to 20 municipalities with their campaign finance filing duties. What progress has SEEC made in establishing the pilot program? How many municipalities have applied to participate?
10. About how many investigations does SEEC conduct annually? For what types of allegations? About how many result in a sanction?

11. PA 15-224, § 6 requires SEEC, with respect to complaints filed by the secretary of the state, to (1) determine whether to investigate within 30 days after the filing and (2) complete an investigation and issue a decision within 90 days after the filing. What steps are involved in SEEC's investigative process? How does the act's timeframe compare with the timeframe for other SEEC investigations?

12. What is your opinion about the reporting requirements placed on candidate committee treasurers: should they be reduced, increased, or are they at an appropriate level? Please explain further.

TA:cmg