

# Government Administration and Elections Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-5520

AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN EXPENDITURES OF CANDIDATE

**Title:** COMMITTEES PARTICIPATING IN THE CITIZENS' ELECTION PROGRAM.

**Vote Date:** 3/28/2018

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 3/19/2018

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Government Administration and Elections Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

The aim of the bill is to eliminate the appearance of corruption in state elections. The bill seeks to limit expenditures by a participating candidate committee under the Citizens Election Program (CEP) to a business owned in whole or part by an immediate family member of the General Assembly.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

#### **Michael Brandi, Executive Director and General Counsel, State Enforcement and Elections Commission (SEEC)**

SEEC notes that there already exists a regulation that prohibits payments to any entity in which the participating candidate or the participating candidate's family members has a 5% or greater ownership interest. See Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, 9-706-2 (b) (4). This bill goes further than existing law. While SEEC agrees that campaign consultants—and “campaigns in a box”—necessitate review, especially when they are owned or run by families of candidates or legislators, they believe that H.B. 5526 does a better job at ensuring for better disclosure of the money spent on such vendors.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

#### **House Republican Caucus**

HB 5520 seeks to eliminate the appearance of corruption in state elections by limiting the expenditures of any candidate committee to any entity owned in whole or in part by the

spouse or child of a member of the General Assembly to \$1,000. The Caucus believes that they have seen a pattern of political insiders taking advantage of the Citizens Election Program and want to ensure that people with close familial relationships with legislators from accessing large amounts of tax payer dollars.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None Expressed.

**Reported by: Susan Tufts**

**Date: 4/12/2018**