"AN ACT CONCERNING REVIEW OF ELECTION LAWS."

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and substitute the following in lieu thereof:

"Section 1. Section 9-621 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):

(a) [No] (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, no individual shall make or incur any expenditure with the consent of, in coordination with or in consultation with any candidate, candidate committee or candidate's agent, no group of two or more individuals acting together that receives funds or makes or incurs expenditures not exceeding one thousand dollars in the aggregate and has not formed a political committee shall make or incur any expenditure, and no candidate or committee shall make or incur any expenditure including an organization expenditure for a party candidate listing, as defined in subparagraph (A) of subdivision (25) of section 9-601, for any written, typed or other printed communication, or any web-based, written communication, which promotes the success or defeat of any
candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or election or
promotes or opposes any political party or solicits funds to benefit any
political party or committee unless such communication bears upon its
face as a disclaimer [(1)] (A) the words "paid for by" and the following:
[(A)] (i) In the case of such an individual, the name and address of
such individual; [(B)] (ii) in the case of a committee other than a party
committee, the name of the committee and its treasurer; [(C)] (iii) in the
case of a party committee, the name of the committee; or [(D)] (iv) in
the case of a group of two or more individuals that receives funds or
makes or incurs expenditures not exceeding one thousand dollars in
the aggregate and has not formed a political committee, the name of
the group and the name and address of its agent, and [(2)] (B) the
words "approved by" and the following: [(A)] In the case of an
individual, group or committee [other than a candidate committee]
making or incurring an expenditure with the consent of, in
coordination with or in consultation with any candidate, candidate
committee or candidate's agent, the name of the candidate [; or (B) in
the case of a candidate committee, the name of the candidate] except
that the provisions of this subparagraph shall not apply to any
candidate committee or town committee.

(2) In the case of a candidate who appears on any written, typed or
other printed communication, or any web-based written
communication, which solicits funds to benefit any political committee
or party committee, such communication shall not be required to bear
upon its face any disclaimer described in subdivision (1) of this
subsection, provided such communication shall not promote the
success of such candidate's campaign for nomination or election or
promote the defeat of the campaign for nomination or election of any
opponent of such candidate.

(b) [In addition to the requirements of subsection (a) of this section:]
(1) No candidate or candidate committee or exploratory committee
established by a candidate shall make or incur any expenditure for
television advertising or Internet video advertising, which promotes
the success of such candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary
or election or the defeat of another candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or election, unless, as a disclaimer, (A) at the end of such advertising there appears simultaneously, for a period of not less than four seconds, except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, (i) a clearly identifiable photographic or similar image of the candidate making such expenditure, (ii) a clearly readable printed statement identifying such candidate, and indicating that such candidate has approved the advertising, and (iii) a simultaneous, personal audio message, in the following form: "I am .... (candidate's name) and I approved this message", and (B) the candidate's name and image appear in, and the candidate's voice is contained in, the narrative of the advertising, before the end of such advertising;

(2) In the case of any expenditure for television advertising or Internet video advertising described in subdivision (1) of this subsection, if such advertising is less than thirty seconds in duration, the disclaimer required under said subdivision may appear for a period of not less than two seconds.

(c) In addition to the requirements of subsection (a) of this section:

[(2)] (1) No candidate or candidate committee or exploratory committee established by a candidate shall make or incur any expenditure for radio advertising or Internet audio advertising, which promotes the success of such candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or election or the defeat of another candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or election, unless, as a disclaimer, (A) the advertising ends with a personal audio statement by the candidate making such expenditure (i) identifying such candidate and the office such candidate is seeking, and (ii) indicating that such candidate has approved the advertising in the following form: "I am .... (candidate's name) and I approved this message", and (B) the candidate's name and voice are contained in the narrative of the advertising, before the end of such advertising; [and]

[(3)] (2) No candidate or candidate committee or exploratory
committee established by a candidate shall make or incur any expenditure for automated telephone calls which promote the success of such candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or election or the defeat of another candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or election, unless the candidate's name and voice are contained in the narrative of the call, before the end of such call;

(3) Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection, in the case of any expenditure made or incurred by a candidate or candidate committee or exploratory committee established by a candidate, which expenditure (A) is for any telephone communication other than a call, and (B) promotes the success of such candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or election or the defeat of another candidate's campaign for nomination at a primary or election, such candidate or committee may list the name of such candidate and provide a link to an Internet web site that displays all information otherwise required to be included in any disclaimer under this subsection in lieu of displaying any such disclaimer upon such communication.

[(c)] (d) No business entity, organization, association, committee, or group of two or more individuals who have joined solely to promote the success or defeat of a referendum question shall make or incur any expenditure for any written, typed or other printed communication which promotes the success or defeat of any referendum question unless such communication bears upon its face, as a disclaimer, the words "paid for by" and the following: (1) In the case of a business entity, organization or association, the name of the business entity, organization or association and the name of its chief executive officer or equivalent, and in the case such communication is made during the ninety-day period immediately prior to the referendum, such communication shall also bear on its face the names of the five persons who made the five largest aggregate covered transfers to such business entity, organization or association during the twelve-month period immediately prior to such referendum. The communication shall also state that additional information about the business entity,
organization or association making such communication may be found on the State Elections Enforcement Commission's Internet web site; (2) in the case of a political committee, the name of the committee and the name of its treasurer; (3) in the case of a party committee, the name of the committee; or (4) in the case of such a group of two or more individuals, the name of the group and the name and address of its agent.

[(d)] (e) The provisions of subsections (a), (b) and (c) to (d), inclusive, of this section do not apply to (1) any editorial, news story, or commentary published in any newspaper, magazine or journal on its own behalf and upon its own responsibility and for which it does not charge or receive any compensation whatsoever, (2) any banner, (3) political paraphernalia including pins, buttons, badges, emblems, hats, bumper stickers or other similar materials, or (4) signs with a surface area of not more than thirty-two square feet.

[(e)] (f) The treasurer of a candidate committee which sponsors any written, typed or other printed communication for the purpose of raising funds to eliminate a campaign deficit of that committee shall include in such communication a statement that the funds are sought to eliminate such a deficit.

[(f)] (g) The treasurer of an exploratory committee or candidate committee established by a candidate for nomination or election to the office of Treasurer which committee sponsors any written, typed or other printed communication for the purpose of raising funds shall include in such communication a statement concerning the prohibitions set forth in subsection (n) of section 1-84, subsection (e) of section 9-612 and subsection (f) of section 9-613.

[(g)] (h) In the event a treasurer of a candidate committee is replaced pursuant to subsection (c) of section 9-602, nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the candidate committee from distributing any printed communication subject to the provisions of this section that has already been printed or otherwise produced, even though
such communication does not accurately designate the successor
treasurer of such candidate committee.

[(h)] (i) (1) No person shall make or incur an independent
expenditure for any written, typed or other printed communication,
including on a billboard, or any web-based, written communication,
unless such communication bears upon its face, as a disclaimer, the
words "Paid for by" and the name of such person and the following
statement: "This message was made independent of any candidate or
political party.". In the case of a person making or incurring such an
independent expenditure during the ninety-day period immediately
prior to the primary or election for which the independent expenditure
is made, such communication shall also bear upon its face the names of
the five persons who made the five largest aggregate covered transfers
to the person making such communication during the twelve-month
period immediately prior to such primary or election, as applicable.
The communication shall also state that additional information about
the person making such communication may be found on the State
Elections Enforcement Commission's Internet web site.

(2) In addition to the requirements of subdivision (1) of this
subsection, no person shall make or incur an independent expenditure
for a video broadcast by television, satellite or Internet, unless at the
end of such advertising there appears for a period of not less than four
seconds as a disclaimer, the following as an audio message and a
written statement: "This message was paid for by (person making the
communication) and made independent of any candidate or political
party.". In the case of a person making or incurring such an
independent expenditure during the ninety-day period immediately
prior to the primary or election for which the independent expenditure
is made, such communication shall also list the names of the five
persons who made the five largest aggregate covered transfers to the
person making such communication during the twelve-month period
immediately prior to such primary or election, as applicable. The
communication shall also state that additional information about the
person making such communication may be found on the State
Elections Enforcement Commission’s Internet web site.

(3) In addition to the requirements of subdivision (1) of this subsection, no person shall make or incur an independent expenditure for an audio communication broadcast by radio, satellite or Internet, unless the advertising ends with a disclaimer that is a personal audio statement by such person’s agent (A) identifying the person paying for the expenditure, and (B) indicating that the message was made independent of any candidate or political party, using the following form: "I am .... (name of the person's agent), .... (title), of .... (the person). This message was made independent of any candidate or political party.". In the case of a person making or incurring such an independent expenditure during the ninety-day period immediately prior to the primary or election for which the independent expenditure is made, such communication shall state the names of the five persons who made the five largest aggregate covered transfers to the person making such communication during the twelve-month period immediately prior to such primary or election, as applicable. The communication shall also state that additional information about the person making such communication may be found on the State Elections Enforcement Commission's Internet web site.

(4) In addition to the requirements of subdivision (1) of this subsection, no person shall make or incur an independent expenditure for telephone calls, unless the narrative of the telephone call identifies the person making the expenditure and during the ninety-day period immediately prior to the primary or election for which the independent expenditure is made, such communication shall state the names of the five persons who made the five largest aggregate covered transfers to the person making such communication during the twelve-month period immediately prior to such primary or election, as applicable. The communication shall also state that additional information about the person making such communication may be found on the State Elections Enforcement Commission's Internet web site.
[(i)] [(j)] In any print, television or social media promotion of a slate of candidates by a party committee, the party committee shall use applicable disclaimers pursuant to the provisions of this section for such promotion, and no individual candidate disclaimers shall be required.

[(j)] [(k)] (1) Except as provided in subdivisions (2) and (3) of this subsection, if any person whose name is included on a disclaimer of a communication pursuant to the provisions of this section, as a person who made a covered transfer to the maker of the communication, is also a recipient of a covered transfer, the maker of the communication, as part of any report filed pursuant to section 9-601d associated with the making of such communication, shall include the names of the five persons who made the top five largest aggregate covered transfers to such recipient during the twelve-month period immediately prior to the primary or election, as applicable.

(2) The name of any person who made a covered transfer to a tax-exempt organization recognized under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding internal revenue code of the United States, as amended from time to time, that has not had its tax exempt status revoked, shall not be disclosed pursuant to the provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(3) The name of any person who made a covered transfer to a person whose name is included on a disclaimer pursuant to the provisions of this section shall not be disclosed pursuant to the provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection if the recipient of such covered transfer accepts covered transfers from at least one hundred different sources, provided no such source accounts for ten per cent or more of the total amount of covered transfers accepted by the recipient during the twelve-month period immediately prior to the primary or election, as applicable.

[(k)] [(l)] Any disclaimer required to be on the face of a written, typed or other printed communication pursuant to the provisions of this
section shall be printed in no smaller than eight-point type of uniform
font when such disclaimer is on a communication contained in a flyer
or leaflet, newspaper, magazine or similar literature, or that is
delivered by mail.

[(l)] (m) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, no person
making an independent expenditure for a communication shall be
required to list as part of any disclaimer pursuant to this section any
person whose covered transfers to the maker of the communication are
not in an aggregate amount of five thousand dollars or more during
the twelve-month period immediately prior to the primary or election,
as applicable, for which such independent expenditure is made.

[(m)] (n) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, any
disclaimer required to be on the face of any Internet text advertisement
communication [(l)] (A) that appears based on the result of a search
conducted by a user of an Internet search engine, and [(2)] (B) the text
of which contains two hundred or fewer characters, shall not be
required to list the names of the five persons who made the top five
largest aggregate covered transfers to the maker of such
communication, as otherwise required by this section, if such
disclaimer [(A)] (i) includes a link to an Internet web site that discloses
the names of such five persons, and [(B)] (ii) otherwise contains any
statement required pursuant to the provisions of this section.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, in the case of any
expenditure made or incurred by a candidate, candidate committee,
exploratory committee established by a candidate, party committee,
legislative caucus committee or legislative leadership committee,
which expenditure (A) is for any image featured on social media, and
(B) promotes the success or defeat of any candidate's campaign for
nomination at a primary or election, such candidate or committee may
provide a link to an Internet web site that displays all information
otherwise required to be included in any disclaimer under this section
in lieu of displaying any such disclaimer on the face of such image.
Sec. 2. Subsection (b) of section 9-
601c of the general statutes is
repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July
1, 2019):

(b) When the State Elections Enforcement Commission evaluates an
expenditure to determine whether such expenditure is an independent
expenditure, there shall be a rebuttable presumption that the following
expenditures are not independent expenditures:

(1) An expenditure made by a person in cooperation, consultation or
in concert with, at the request, suggestion or direction of, or pursuant
to a general or particular understanding with (A) a candidate,
candidate committee, political committee or party committee, or (B) a
consultant or other agent acting on behalf of a candidate, candidate
committee, political committee or party committee;

(2) An expenditure made by a person for the production,
dissemination, distribution or publication, in whole or in substantial
part, of any broadcast or any written, graphic or other form of political
advertising or campaign communication prepared by (A) a candidate,
candidate committee, political committee or party committee, or (B) a
consultant or other agent acting on behalf of a candidate, candidate
committee, political committee or party committee;

(3) An expenditure made by a person based on information about a
candidate's, political committee's, or party committee's plans, projects
or needs, provided by (A) a candidate, candidate committee, political
committee or party committee, or (B) a consultant or other agent acting
on behalf of a candidate, candidate committee, political committee or
party committee, with the intent that such expenditure be made;

(4) An expenditure made by an individual who, in the same election
cycle, is serving or has served as the campaign chairperson, treasurer
or deputy treasurer of a candidate committee, political committee or
party committee benefiting from such expenditure, or in any other
executive or policymaking position, including as a member, employee,
fundraiser, consultant or other agent, of a candidate committee,
political committee or party committee. For the purposes of this subdivision, "election cycle" means the period beginning January first of the year in which a regular election is held and ending the day after such regular election;

(5) An expenditure made by a person or an entity on or after January first in the year of an election in which a candidate is seeking public office that benefits such candidate when such person or entity has hired an individual as an employee or consultant and such individual was an employee of or consultant to such candidate's candidate committee or such candidate's opponent's candidate committee during any part of the eighteen-month period preceding such expenditure;

(6) An expenditure made by a person for fundraising activities (A) for a candidate, candidate committee, political committee or party committee, or a consultant or other agent acting on behalf of a candidate, candidate committee, political committee or party committee, or (B) for the solicitation or receipt of contributions on behalf of a candidate, candidate committee, political committee or party committee, or a consultant or other agent acting on behalf of a candidate, candidate committee, political committee or party committee;

(7) An expenditure made by a person based on information about a candidate's campaign plans, projects or needs, that is directly or indirectly provided by a candidate, the candidate's candidate committee, a political committee or a party committee, or a consultant or other agent acting on behalf of such candidate, candidate committee, political committee or party committee, to the person making the expenditure or such person's agent, with an express or tacit understanding that such person is considering making the expenditure;

(8) An expenditure made by a person for a communication that clearly identifies a candidate during an election campaign, if the
person making the expenditure, or such person's agent, has informed
the candidate who benefits from the expenditure, that candidate's
candidate committee, a political committee or a party committee, or a
consultant or other agent acting on behalf of the benefiting candidate
or candidate committee, political committee, or party committee,
concerning the communication's contents, or of the intended audience,
timing, location or mode or frequency of dissemination. As used in this
subdivision, a communication clearly identifies a candidate when that
communication contains the name, nickname, initials, photograph or
drawing of the candidate or an unambiguous reference to that
candidate, which includes, but is not limited to, a reference that can
only mean that candidate; and

(9) An expenditure made by a person or an entity for consultant or
creative services, including, but not limited to, services related to
communications strategy or design or campaign strategy or to engage
a campaign-related vendor, to be used to promote or oppose a
candidate's election to office if the provider of such services is or has
provided consultant or creative services to such candidate, such
candidate's candidate committee or an agent of such candidate
committee, or to any opposing candidate's candidate committee or an
agent of such candidate committee after January first of the year in
which the expenditure occurs. For purposes of this subdivision,
communications strategy or design does not include the costs of
printing or costs for the use of a medium for the purpose of
communications. For purposes of this subdivision, campaign-related
vendor includes, but is not limited to, a vendor that provides the
following services: Polling, mail design, mail strategy, political
strategy, general campaign advice or telephone banking.

Sec. 3. Subsection (b) of section 9-603 of the general statutes is
repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July
1, 2019):

(b) [Statements] (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this
subsection, statements filed by political committees formed solely to
aid or promote the success or defeat of a referendum question to be voted upon by the electors of a single municipality and those political committees or candidate committees formed to aid or promote the success or defeat of any candidate for public office, other than those enumerated in subsection (a) of this section, or the position of town committee member shall be filed only with the town clerk of the municipality in which the election or referendum is to be held. Each unsalaried town clerk shall be entitled to receive ten cents from the town for the filing of each such statement.

(2) In the case of a municipality with a population of not less than seventy-five thousand, statements filed by the candidate committee of a candidate for chief executive officer of such municipality shall be filed with the State Elections Enforcement Commission.

Sec. 4. Subsection (e) of section 9-704 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):

(e) (1) The following shall not be deemed to be qualifying contributions under subsection (a) of this section and shall be returned by the treasurer of the candidate committee to the contributor; [or transmitted to the State Elections Enforcement Commission for deposit in the Citizens' Election Fund:]

[(1)] (A) A contribution from a principal of a state contractor or prospective state contractor;

[(2)] (B) A contribution of less than five dollars, and a contribution of five dollars or more from an individual who does not provide the full name and complete address of the individual;

[(3)] (C) A contribution under subdivision (1) or (2) of subsection (a) of this section from an individual who does not reside in the state, in excess of the applicable limit on contributions from out-of-state individuals in subsection (a) of this section; and
[(4)] (D) A contribution made by a youth who is less than twelve years of age.

(2) If: (A) The treasurer of the candidate committee submits a contribution described in subdivision (1) of this subsection to the State Elections Enforcement Commission as part of an application for a grant under the Citizens' Election Program; (B) the commission deems such contribution not to be a qualifying contribution, pursuant to subsection (d) of section 9-706, as amended by this act; and (C) the treasurer opts for the commission to return such contribution to the committee, pursuant to said subsection, then the treasurer may either refund such contribution to the contributor upon its return to the committee or remit such contribution to any charitable organization that is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding internal revenue code of the United States, as amended from time to time.

Sec. 5. Subsection (d) of section 9-706 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):

(d) (1) In accordance with the provisions of subsection (g) of this section, the commission shall review the application [] and determine whether [(1)] (A) the candidate committee for the applicant has received the required qualifying contributions, [(2)] (B) in the case of an application for a grant from the fund for a primary campaign, the applicant has met the applicable condition under subsection (a) of this section for applying for such grant and complied with the provisions of subsections (b) and (c) of this section, [(3)] (C) in the case of an application for a grant from the fund for a general election campaign, the applicant has met the applicable condition under subsection (a) of this section for applying for such moneys and complied with the provisions of subsections (b) and (c) of this section, and [(4)] (D) in the case of an application by a minor party or petitioning party candidate for a grant from the fund for a general election campaign, the applicant qualifies as an eligible minor party candidate or an eligible petitioning
party candidate, whichever is applicable. For each contribution received by the candidate committee of an applicant that the commission deems not to be a qualifying contribution, the commission shall advise such applicant of such determination and cite the applicable reason under subsection (e) of section 9-704, as amended by this act, for such determination. Upon such advice, the treasurer of such candidate committee shall either opt for the commission to return such contribution to the committee or for the commission to deposit such contribution in the Citizens' Election Fund. If the commission approves an application, the commission shall determine the amount of the grant payable to the candidate committee for the applicant pursuant to section 9-705 from the fund, and notify the State Comptroller and the candidate of such candidate committee, of such amount. If the timing of the commission's approval of the grant in relation to the Secretary of the State's determination of ballot status is such that the commission cannot determine whether the qualified candidate committee is entitled to the applicable full initial grant for the primary or election or the applicable partial grant for the primary or election, as the case may be, the commission shall approve the lesser applicable partial initial grant. The commission shall then authorize the payment of the remaining portion of the applicable grant after the commission has knowledge of the circumstances regarding the ballot status of the opposing candidates in such primary or election. Not later than two business days following notification by the commission, the State Comptroller shall draw an order on the State Treasurer for payment of any such approved amount to the qualified candidate committee from the fund.

(2) Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter or chapter 155, in the case of a contribution the commission deems not to be a qualifying contribution, pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, such determination shall not constitute grounds for any action, including, but not limited to, any complaint investigated by the commission or any other investigation initiated by the commission, against such contributor for the making of such contribution or against the
treasurer, chairperson candidate or other person associated with the
candidate committee for the receipt of such contribution.

Sec. 6. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2019) (a) There is established an
Election Law Review Commission for the purpose of reviewing the
state's election laws, including, but not limited to, laws regarding (1)
the joint campaigning of candidates for Governor and Lieutenant
Governor for a party's nomination, (2) the timing and process for
holding conventions for endorsement, and primaries for nomination,
of candidates, (3) criteria for a voting district's inclusion in post-
election audits conducted under section 9-320f of the general statutes,
and (4) the use of electronic devices in polling places by official
checkers to assist in checking names of electors seeking to vote. The
commission shall consist of the president pro tempore of the Senate,
the speaker of the House of Representatives, the majority leader of the
Senate, the majority leader of the House of Representatives, the
minority leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the House of
Representatives and the Secretary of the State or the Secretary's
designee. The president pro tempore of the Senate and the speaker of
the House of Representatives shall be chairpersons of the commission.
A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum and all
actions of the commission shall require the affirmative vote of a
majority of the full committee membership. The Election Law Review
Commission shall meet as often as may be necessary to perform its
duties.

(b) On or before February 15, 2020, and annually thereafter, the
Election Law Review Commission shall submit a report to the joint
standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
matters relating to elections, in accordance with section 11-4a of the
general statutes, and make any recommendation for legislation to
address any issue discussed in such report.

Sec. 7. Subsection (b) of section 9-601a of the general statutes is
repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July
1, 2019, and applicable to actions pending on or filed on or after July 1, 2019):
(b) As used in this chapter and chapter 157, "contribution" does not mean:

(1) A loan of money made in the ordinary course of business by a national or state bank;

(2) Any communication made by a corporation, organization or association solely to its members, owners, stockholders, executive or administrative personnel, or their families;

(3) Nonpartisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote campaigns by any corporation, organization or association aimed at its members, owners, stockholders, executive or administrative personnel, or their families;

(4) Uncompensated services provided by individuals volunteering their time on behalf of a party committee, political committee, slate committee or candidate committee, including any services provided for the benefit of nonparticipating and participating candidates under the Citizens' Election Program and any unreimbursed travel expenses made by an individual who volunteers the individual's personal services to any such committee. For purposes of this subdivision, an individual is a volunteer if such individual is not receiving compensation for such services regardless of whether such individual received compensation in the past or may receive compensation for similar services that may be performed in the future;

(5) The use of real or personal property, a portion or all of the cost of invitations and the cost of food or beverages, voluntarily provided by an individual to a candidate, including a nonparticipating or participating candidate under the Citizens' Election Program, or to a party, political or slate committee, in rendering voluntary personal services at the individual's residential premises or a community room in the individual's residence facility, to the extent that the cumulative value of the invitations, food or beverages provided by an individual on behalf of any candidate or committee does not exceed four hundred dollars with respect to any single event or does not exceed eight
hundred dollars for any such event hosted by two or more individuals, provided at least one such individual owns or resides at the residential premises, and further provided the cumulative value of the invitations, food or beverages provided by an individual on behalf of any such candidate or committee does not exceed eight hundred dollars with respect to a calendar year or single election, as the case may be;

(6) The sale of food or beverage for use by a party, political, slate or candidate committee, including those for a participating or nonparticipating candidate, at a discount, if the charge is not less than the cost to the vendor, to the extent that the cumulative value of the discount given to or on behalf of any single candidate committee does not exceed four hundred dollars with respect to any single primary or election, or to or on behalf of any party, political or slate committee, does not exceed six hundred dollars in a calendar year;

(7) The display of a lawn sign by a human being or on real property;

(8) The payment, by a party committee or slate committee of the costs of preparation, display, mailing or other distribution incurred by the committee or individual with respect to any printed slate card, sample ballot or other printed list containing the names of three or more candidates;

(9) The donation of any item of personal property by an individual to a committee for a fund-raising affair, including a tag sale or auction, or the purchase by an individual of any such item at such an affair, to the extent that the cumulative value donated or purchased does not exceed one hundred dollars;

(10) (A) The purchase of advertising space which clearly identifies the purchaser, in a program for a fund-raising affair sponsored by the candidate committee of a candidate for an office of a municipality, provided the cumulative purchase of such space does not exceed two hundred fifty dollars from any single such candidate or the candidate’s committee with respect to any single election campaign if the purchaser is a business entity or fifty dollars for purchases by any
other person;

(B) The purchase of advertising space which clearly identifies the purchaser, in a program for a fund-raising affair or on signs at a fund-raising affair sponsored by a party committee or a political committee, other than an exploratory committee, provided the cumulative purchase of such space does not exceed two hundred fifty dollars from any single party committee or a political committee, other than an exploratory committee, in any calendar year if the purchaser is a business entity or fifty dollars for purchases by any other person. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subparagraph, the following may not purchase advertising space in a program for a fund-raising affair or on signs at a fund-raising affair sponsored by a party committee or a political committee, other than an exploratory committee: (i) A communicator lobbyist, (ii) a member of the immediate family of a communicator lobbyist, (iii) a state contractor, (iv) a prospective state contractor, or (v) a principal of a state contractor or prospective state contractor. As used in this subparagraph, "state contractor", "prospective state contractor" and "principal of a state contractor or prospective state contractor" have the same meanings as provided in subsection (f) of section 9-612;

(11) The payment of money by a candidate to the candidate's candidate committee, provided the committee is for a nonparticipating candidate;

(12) The donation of goods or services by a business entity to a committee for a fund-raising affair, including a tag sale or auction, to the extent that the cumulative value donated does not exceed two hundred dollars;

(13) The advance of a security deposit by an individual to a telephone company, as defined in section 16-1, for telecommunications service for a committee or to another utility company, such as an electric distribution company, provided the security deposit is refunded to the individual;
(14) The provision of facilities, equipment, technical and managerial support, and broadcast time by a community antenna television company, as defined in section 16-1, for community access programming pursuant to section 16-331a, unless (A) the major purpose of providing such facilities, equipment, support and time is to influence the nomination or election of a candidate, or (B) such facilities, equipment, support and time are provided on behalf of a political party;

(15) The sale of food or beverage by a town committee to an individual at a town fair, county fair, local festival or similar mass gathering held within the state, to the extent that the cumulative payment made by any one individual for such items does not exceed fifty dollars;

(16) An organization expenditure by a party committee, legislative caucus committee or legislative leadership committee;

(17) The donation of food or beverage by an individual for consumption at a slate, candidate, political committee or party committee meeting, event or activity that is not a fund-raising affair to the extent that the cumulative value of the food or beverages donated by an individual for a single meeting or event does not exceed fifty dollars;

(18) The value associated with the de minimis activity on behalf of a party committee, political committee, slate committee or candidate committee, including for activities including, but not limited to, (A) the creation of electronic or written communications or digital photos or video as part of an electronic file created on a voluntary basis without compensation, including, but not limited to, the creation and ongoing content development and delivery of social media on the Internet or telephone, including, but not limited to, the sending or receiving of electronic mail or messages, (B) the posting or display of a candidate's name or group of candidates' names at a town fair, county fair, local festival or similar mass gathering by a party committee, (C) the use of
personal property or a service that is customarily attendant to the occupancy of a residential dwelling, or the donation of an item or items of personal property that are customarily used for campaign purposes, by an individual, to a candidate committee, provided the cumulative fair market value of such use of personal property or service or items of personal property does not exceed one hundred dollars in the aggregate for any single election or calendar year, as the case may be;

(19) The use of offices, telephones, computers and similar equipment provided by a party committee, legislative caucus committee or legislative leadership committee that serve as headquarters for or are used by such party committee, legislative caucus committee or legislative leadership committee;

(20) A communication, as described in subdivision (7) of subsection (b) of section 9-601b, as amended by this act;

(21) An independent expenditure, as defined in section 9-601c, as amended by this act;

(22) A communication containing an endorsement on behalf of a candidate for nomination or election to the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, State Treasurer, State Comptroller, Attorney General, state senator or state representative, from a candidate for the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, State Treasurer, State Comptroller, Attorney General, state senator or state representative, provided the candidate (A) making the endorsement is unopposed at the time of the communication, and (B) being endorsed paid for such communication;

(23) A communication that is sent by mail to addresses in the district for which a candidate being endorsed by another candidate pursuant to this subdivision is seeking nomination or election to the office of state senator or state representative, containing an endorsement on behalf of such candidate for such nomination or election from a candidate for the office of state senator or state representative,
provided the candidate (A) making the endorsement is not seeking
election to the office of state senator or state representative for a
district that contains any geographical area shared by the district for
the office to which the endorsed candidate is seeking nomination or
election, and (B) being endorsed paid for such communication; [or]

(24) A communication described in subdivision (2) of subsection (a)
of section 9-601b that refers to a clearly identified candidate for
Governor or President of the United States, which communication is
paid for by a candidate for nomination or election to any other office or
by any committee of such candidate, provided such communication
shall only not be a contribution to any candidate for Governor or
President of the United States; or

(25) Campaign training events provided to multiple
individuals by a legislative caucus committee or party committee and
any associated materials, provided the cumulative value of such events
and materials does not exceed six thousand dollars in the aggregate for
a calendar year.

Sec. 8. Subsection (b) of section 9-601b of the general statutes is
repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July
1, 2019, and applicable to actions pending on or filed on or after July 1, 2019):

(b) The term "expenditure" does not mean:

(1) A loan of money, made in the ordinary course of business, by a
state or national bank;

(2) A communication made by any corporation, organization or
association solely to its members, owners, stockholders, executive or
administrative personnel, or their families;

(3) Nonpartisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote campaigns
by any corporation, organization or association aimed at its members,
owners, stockholders, executive or administrative personnel, or their
families;
(4) Uncompensated services provided by individuals volunteering their time on behalf of a party committee, political committee, slate committee or candidate committee, including any services provided for the benefit of nonparticipating and participating candidates under the Citizens' Election Program and any unreimbursed travel expenses made by an individual who volunteers the individual's personal services to any such committee. For purposes of this subdivision, an individual is a volunteer if such individual is not receiving compensation for such services regardless of whether such individual received compensation in the past or may receive compensation for similar services that may be performed in the future;

(5) Any news story, commentary or editorial distributed through the facilities of any broadcasting station, newspaper, magazine or other periodical, unless such facilities are owned or controlled by any political party, committee or candidate;

(6) The use of real or personal property, a portion or all of the cost of invitations and the cost of food or beverages, voluntarily provided by an individual to a candidate, including a nonparticipating or participating candidate under the Citizens' Election Program, or to a party, political or slate committee, in rendering voluntary personal services at the individual's residential premises or a community room in the individual's residence facility, to the extent that the cumulative value of the invitations, food or beverages provided by an individual on behalf of any candidate or committee does not exceed four hundred dollars with respect to any single event or does not exceed eight hundred dollars for any such event hosted by two or more individuals, provided at least one such individual owns or resides at the residential premises, and further provided the cumulative value of the invitations, food or beverages provided by an individual on behalf of any such candidate or committee does not exceed eight hundred dollars with respect to a calendar year or single election, as the case may be;

(7) A communication described in subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of this section that includes speech or expression made (A) prior to the
ninety-day period preceding the date of a primary or an election at
which the clearly identified candidate or candidates are seeking
nomination to public office or position, that is made for the purpose of
influencing any legislative or administrative action, as defined in
section 1-91, or executive action, or (B) during a legislative session for
the purpose of influencing legislative action;

(8) An organization expenditure by a party committee, legislative
caucus committee or legislative leadership committee;

(9) A commercial advertisement that refers to an owner, director or
officer of a business entity who is also a candidate and that had
previously been broadcast or appeared when the owner, director or
officer was not a candidate;

(10) (A) A communication containing an endorsement on behalf of a
candidate for nomination or election to the office of Governor,
Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, State Treasurer, State
Comptroller, Attorney General, state senator or state representative,
from a candidate for the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor,
Secretary of the State, State Treasurer, State Comptroller, Attorney
General, state senator or state representative, [shall not be an
expenditure attributable to the endorsing candidate, if] provided (i) the
candidate making the endorsement is unopposed at the time of the
communication, [j] and (ii) the communication is paid for by the
candidate or the committee of the candidate being endorsed.

(B) Notwithstanding the provisions of subparagraph (A) of this
subdivision, a communication described in said subparagraph shall be
an expenditure on behalf of the candidate or committee paying for the
communication;

(11) (A) A communication that is sent by mail to addresses in the
district for which a candidate being endorsed by another candidate
pursuant to the provisions of this subdivision is seeking nomination or
election to the office of state senator or state representative, containing
an endorsement on behalf of such candidate for such nomination or
election, from a candidate for the office of state senator or state
representative, [shall not be an expenditure attributable to the
endorsing candidate, if] provided (i) the candidate making the
endorsement is not seeking election to the office of state senator or
state representative for a district that contains any geographical area
shared by the district for the office to which the endorsed candidate is
seeking nomination or election, [J] and (ii) the communication is paid
for by the candidate or the committee of the candidate being endorsed.

(B) Notwithstanding the provisions of subparagraph (A) of this
subdivision, a communication described in said subparagraph shall be
an expenditure on behalf of the candidate or committee paying for the
communication;

(12) A communication described in subdivision (2) of subsection (a)
of this section that refers to a clearly identified candidate for Governor
or President of the United States, which communication is paid for by
a candidate for nomination or election to any other office or by any
committee of such candidate, provided such communication shall only
not be an expenditure to the extent it refers to any candidate for
Governor or President of the United States;

[(12)] (13) Campaign training events provided to multiple
individuals by a legislative caucus committee or party committee and
any associated materials, provided the cumulative value of such events
and materials does not exceed six thousand dollars in the aggregate for
a calendar year;

(14) Payment by a person from his or her personal funds for the
purpose of such person receiving campaign training prior to becoming
a candidate or upon becoming a candidate;

[(13)] (15) A lawful communication by any charitable organization
which is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the
Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding
internal revenue code of the United States, as from time to time
amended;
(14) The use of offices, telephones, computers and similar equipment provided by a party committee, legislative caucus committee or legislative leadership committee that serve as headquarters for or are used by such party committee, legislative caucus committee or legislative leadership committee; [or]

(15) An expense or expenses incurred by a human being acting alone in an amount that is two hundred dollars or less, in the aggregate, that benefits a candidate for a single election; [] or

(17) A solicitation via the Internet for a contribution to any committee, provided any such contribution described in this subdivision shall be construed to be an expenditure.

Sec. 9. Subsection (c) of section 9-710 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):

(c) A candidate who intends to participate in the Citizens’ Election Program may provide personal funds for such candidate’s campaign for nomination or election in an amount not exceeding: (1) For a candidate for the office of Governor, twenty thousand dollars; (2) for a candidate for the office of Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State Comptroller, State Treasurer or Secretary of the State, ten thousand dollars; (3) for a candidate for the office of state senator, two thousand dollars; or (4) for a candidate for the office of state representative, one thousand dollars. Such personal funds shall not constitute a qualifying contribution under section 9-704, as amended by this act. Any personal funds paid by such candidate for the purpose of receiving campaign training, as described in subdivision (14) of subsection (b) of section 9-601b, as amended by this act, shall not count toward the maximum amounts set forth in this subsection.

Sec. 10. Subsection (g) of section 9-7a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):
(g) (1) In the case of a written complaint filed with the commission pursuant to section 9-7b, as amended by this act, commission staff shall conduct and complete a preliminary examination of such complaint by the fourteenth day following its receipt, at which time such staff shall, at its discretion, (A) dismiss the complaint for failure to allege any substantial violation of state election law supported by evidence, (B) engage the respondent in discussions in an effort to speedily resolve any matter pertaining to a de minimis violation, or (C) investigate and docket the complaint, prioritized in the order received, for a determination by the commission that probable cause or no probable cause exists for any such violation. If commission staff dismisses a complaint pursuant to subparagraph (A) of this subdivision, such staff shall provide a brief written statement concisely setting forth the reasons for such dismissal to the complainant and respondent, and such statement shall remain confidential, except upon the request of the respondent. If commission staff engages a respondent pursuant to subparagraph (B) of this subdivision but is unable to speedily resolve any such matter described in said subparagraph by the forty-fifth day following receipt of the complaint, such staff shall docket such complaint, prioritized in the order received, for a determination by the commission that probable cause or no probable cause exists for any violation of state election law. If the commission does not, by the sixtieth day following receipt of the complaint, either issue a decision or render its determination that probable cause or no probable cause exists for any violation of state election laws, the complainant or respondent may apply to the superior court for the judicial district of Hartford for an order to show cause why the commission has not acted upon the complaint and to provide evidence that the commission has unreasonably delayed action. For any complaint received on or after January 1, 2018, if the commission does not, by one year following receipt of such complaint, issue a decision thereon, the commission shall dismiss such complaint, provided the length of time of any delay caused by (i) the commission or commission staff granting any extension or continuance to a respondent prior to the issuance of any such decision, (ii) any
subpoena issued in connection with such complaint, (iii) any litigation
in state or federal court related to such complaint, or (iv) any
investigation by, or consultation of the commission or commission
staff with, the Chief State's Attorney, the Attorney General, the United
States Department of Justice or the United States Attorney for
Connecticut related to such complaint, shall be added to such one year.

(2) In the case of a statement filed by the Secretary of the State with
the commission pursuant to section 9-7b, as amended by this act, on or
after July 1, 2015, if the commission does not, by the thirtieth day
following such filing, make a determination to investigate such
statement and, by the ninetieth day following such filing, complete any
investigation of such statement and issue a decision, the Secretary may
apply to the superior court for the judicial district of Hartford for an
order to show cause why the commission has not acted upon the
statement and to provide evidence that the commission has
unreasonably delayed action.

(3) Any judicial proceeding pursuant to subdivision (1) or (2) of this
subsection shall be privileged with respect to assignment for trial. The
commission shall appear and give appropriate explanation in the
matter. The court may, in its discretion, order the commission to: (A)
Continue to proceed pursuant to section 9-7b, as amended by this act,
(B) act by a date certain, or (C) refer the complaint or statement to the
Chief State's Attorney. Nothing in this subsection shall require the
commission, in any proceeding brought pursuant to this subsection, to
disclose records or documents which are not required to be disclosed
pursuant to subsection (b) of section 1-210 or subdivision (1) of
subsection (a) of section 9-7b, as amended by this act. Nothing in this
subsection shall preclude the commission from continuing its
investigation or taking any action permitted by section 9-7b, as
amended by this act, unless otherwise ordered by the court. The
commission or any other party may, within seven days after a decision
by the court under this subsection, file an appeal of the decision with
the Appellate Court.
Sec. 11. Subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of section 9-7b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):

(1) To make investigations on its own initiative or with respect to statements filed with the commission by the Secretary of the State, any town clerk or any registrar of voters or upon written complaint under oath by any individual, with respect to alleged violations of any provision of the general statutes relating to any election or referendum, any primary held pursuant to section 9-423, 9-425 or 9-464 or any primary held pursuant to a special act, and to hold hearings when the commission deems necessary to investigate violations of any provisions of the general statutes relating to any such election, primary or referendum, and for the purpose of such hearings the commission may administer oaths, examine witnesses and receive oral and documentary evidence, and shall have the power to subpoena witnesses under procedural rules the commission shall adopt, to compel their attendance and to require the production for examination of any books and papers which the commission deems relevant to any matter under investigation or in question. Until the commission determines that [it is necessary to investigate] probable cause or no probable cause exists for a violation, commission members and staff shall keep confidential any information concerning a complaint, preliminary investigation or investigation, except upon request of the treasurer, deputy treasurer, chairperson or candidate affiliated with a committee that is the subject of the complaint, preliminary investigation or investigation. If the commission determines that no probable cause exists for a violation, the complaint and the record of the investigation of the commission and staff shall remain confidential, except upon the request of the respondent. No complainant, respondent, witness; treasurer, deputy treasurer, candidate or chairperson affiliated with a committee that is the subject of the complaint; or commission or staff member shall disclose to any third party any information learned from the investigation, including knowledge of the existence of a complaint, which the disclosing party
would not otherwise have known. If the commission determines that
probable cause exists for a violation, the commission shall make public
the record of the investigation. In connection with its investigation of
any alleged violation of any provision of chapter 145, or of any
provision of section 9-359 or section 9-359a, the commission shall also
have the power to subpoena any municipal clerk and to require the
production for examination of any absentee ballot, inner and outer
envelope from which any such ballot has been removed, depository
envelope containing any such ballot or inner or outer envelope as
provided in sections 9-150a and 9-150b and any other record, form or
document as provided in section 9-150b, in connection with the
election, primary or referendum to which the investigation relates. In
case of a refusal to comply with any subpoena issued pursuant to this
subsection or to testify with respect to any matter upon which that
person may be lawfully interrogated, the superior court for the judicial
district of Hartford, on application of the commission, may issue an
order requiring such person to comply with such subpoena and to
testify; failure to obey any such order of the court may be punished by
the court as a contempt thereof. In any matter under investigation
which concerns the operation or inspection of or outcome recorded on
any voting tabulator, the commission may issue an order to the
registrars of voters to impound such tabulator until the investigation is
completed;

Sec. 12. Subdivision (5) of subsection (a) of section 9-7b of the
general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):

(5) (A) To inspect or audit at any reasonable time and upon
reasonable notice the accounts or records of any treasurer or principal
treasurer, except as provided for in subparagraph (B) of this
subdivision, as required by chapter 155 or 157 and to audit any such
election, primary or referendum held within the state; provided, (i) (I)
not later than two months preceding the day of an election at which a
candidate is seeking election, the commission shall complete any audit
it has initiated in the absence of a complaint that involves a committee
of the same candidate from a previous election, and (II) during the two-month period preceding the day of an election at which a candidate is seeking election, the commission shall not initiate an audit in the absence of a complaint that involves a committee of the same candidate from a previous election, and (ii) the commission shall not audit any caucus, as defined in subdivision (1) of section 9-372.

(B) When conducting an audit after an election or primary, the commission shall randomly audit not more than fifty per cent of candidate committees, which shall be selected through the process of a weighted lottery conducted by the commission that takes into account the selection frequency of a district served by the office of state senator or state representative, as applicable, for the immediately preceding three regular elections for such office and increases or decreases the likelihood that such district will be selected for audit based on such selection frequency, except that the commissioner shall audit all candidate committees for candidates for a state-wide office.

(C) The commission shall notify, in writing, any committee of a candidate for an office in the general election, or of any candidate who had a primary for nomination to any such office not later than May thirty-first of the year immediately following such election. In no case shall the commission audit any such candidate committee that the commission fails to provide notice to in accordance with this subparagraph. []

(D) Any audit conducted under this subdivision shall be limited to the financial records necessary to demonstrate that vendor payments were properly made, including books, financial statements, invoices and checks.

Sec. 13. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2019) (a) (1) There is established a Commission for the Revision of Election Laws. The commission shall be composed of the president pro tempore of the Senate, the speaker of the House of Representatives, the majority leader of the Senate, the majority leader of the House of Representatives, the minority leader of
the Senate, the minority leader of the House of Representatives and the Secretary of the State, or their designees, the chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to elections, or their designees chosen from among the members of the committee, and nine members appointed as follows: The president pro tempore of the Senate shall appoint two members and the speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint two members; and the Secretary of the State shall appoint five members, each of whom shall have experience or expertise in election administration. The commission shall elect one of its members to serve as chairperson.

(2) All appointments by the president pro tempore of the Senate, the speaker of the House of Representatives and the Secretary of the State shall be for two years or until a successor is appointed. If any member appointed by the Secretary of the State vacates his or her office before the expiration of the term, the Secretary shall appoint a successor for the unexpired term.

(b) The commission shall:

(1) Recommend, from time to time, such changes in title 9 of the general statutes as it deems necessary to modify or eliminate antiquated and inequitable rules of law, and to bring said title into harmony with modern conditions;

(2) Recommend the express repeal of all provisions of title 9 of the general statutes repealed by implication or held unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of the state or any federal court;

(3) Assist the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to elections and other commissions and groups appointed by the Governor or General Assembly to study election law within the state;

(4) Educate the public as to the need for election law revision through public hearings or community forums, giving the public an
opportunity to be heard;

(5) Organize and conduct meetings within the state for scholarly discussion of current problems in election law, bringing together representatives of the legislature, practicing attorneys, members of the bench and bar, and representatives of the law teaching profession; and

(6) Not later than February first in 2020, and not later than January fifth in 2021, submit a report to the General Assembly in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. The report shall include proposed legislative drafts and a description of the research and projects initiated, pending or completed during the preceding year with recommendations and comments. The commission may also whenever it considers it appropriate submit other recommendations and legislative proposals to the General Assembly and its committees.

(c) The commission shall terminate on July 1, 2021.

Sec. 14. Subdivision (16) of section 4-166 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective October 1, 2019):

(16) "Regulation" means each agency statement of general applicability, without regard to its designation, that implements, interprets, or prescribes law or policy, or describes the organization, procedure, or practice requirements of any agency. The term includes the amendment or repeal of a prior regulation, but does not include (A) statements concerning only the internal management of any agency and not affecting private rights or procedures available to the public, (B) declaratory rulings issued pursuant to section 4-176, as amended by this act, other than declaratory rulings issued pursuant to section 16 of this act, or (C) intra-agency or interagency memoranda;

Sec. 15. Section 4-176 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective October 1, 2019):
(a) Any person may petition an agency, or an agency may on its own motion initiate a proceeding, for a declaratory ruling as to the validity of any regulation, or the applicability to specified circumstances of a provision of the general statutes, a regulation, or a final decision on a matter within the jurisdiction of the agency.

(b) Each agency shall adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, that provide for (1) the form and content of petitions for declaratory rulings, (2) the filing procedure for such petitions and (3) the procedural rights of persons with respect to the petitions.

(c) Within thirty days after receipt of a petition for a declaratory ruling, an agency shall give notice of the petition to all persons to whom notice is required by any provision of law and to all persons who have requested notice of declaratory ruling petitions on the subject matter of the petition.

(d) If the agency finds that a timely petition to become a party or to intervene has been filed according to the regulations adopted under subsection (b) of this section, the agency: (1) May grant a person status as a party if the agency finds that the petition states facts demonstrating that the petitioner's legal rights, duties or privileges shall be specifically affected by the agency proceeding; and (2) may grant a person status as an intervenor if the agency finds that the petition states facts demonstrating that the petitioner's participation is in the interests of justice and will not impair the orderly conduct of the proceedings. The agency may define an intervenor's participation in the manner set forth in subsection (d) of section 4-177a.

(e) Within sixty days after receipt of a petition for a declaratory ruling, an agency in writing shall: (1) Issue a ruling declaring the validity of a regulation or the applicability of the provision of the general statutes, the regulation, or the final decision in question to the specified circumstances, (2) order the matter set for specified proceedings, (3) agree to issue a declaratory ruling by a specified date,
(4) decide not to issue a declaratory ruling and initiate regulation-making proceedings, under section 4-168, on the subject, [or] (5) decide not to issue a declaratory ruling, stating the reasons for its action, or (6) in the case of a declaratory ruling issued under section 16 of this act, publish notice of intent to adopt regulations concerning such declaratory ruling.

(f) A copy of all rulings issued and any actions taken under subsection (e) of this section shall be promptly delivered to the petitioner and other parties personally or by United States mail, certified or registered, postage prepaid, return receipt requested.

(g) If the agency conducts a hearing in a proceeding for a declaratory ruling, the provisions of subsection (b) of section 4-177c, section 4-178 and section 4-179 shall apply to the hearing.

(h) [A] Except as provided in section 16 of this act, a declaratory ruling shall be effective when personally delivered or mailed or on such later date specified by the agency in the ruling, shall have the same status and binding effect as an order issued in a contested case and shall be a final decision for purposes of appeal in accordance with the provisions of section 4-183. A declaratory ruling shall contain the names of all parties to the proceeding, the particular facts on which it is based and the reasons for its conclusion.

(i) If an agency does not issue a declaratory ruling, other than a declaratory ruling issued under section 16 of this act, within one hundred eighty days after the filing of a petition therefor, or within such longer period as may be agreed by the parties, the agency shall be deemed to have decided not to issue such ruling.

(j) The agency shall keep a record of the proceeding as provided in section 4-177.

Sec. 16. (NEW) (Effective October 1, 2019) Prior to issuing a declaratory ruling pursuant to section 4-176 of the general statutes, as amended by this act, the State Elections Enforcement Commission
shall adopt such declaratory ruling as a regulation, in accordance with
the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes. The commission
shall publish on the eRegulations System a notice of intent to adopt
such declaratory ruling as a regulation not later than sixty days after
receipt of a petition for a declaratory ruling. Such declaratory ruling
shall be effective when the regulation is posted on the eRegulations
System by the Secretary of the State under section 4-172 of the general
statutes.

Sec. 17. Subsection (a) of section 9-706 of the general statutes is
repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July
1, 2019):

(a) (1) [A] Except as provided in subdivision (6) of this subsection, a
participating candidate for nomination to the office of state senator or
state representative in 2008, or thereafter, or the office of Governor,
Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State Comptroller, Secretary
of the State or State Treasurer in 2010, or thereafter, may apply to the
State Elections Enforcement Commission for a grant from the fund
under the Citizens' Election Program for a primary campaign, after the
close of the state convention of the candidate's party that is called for
the purpose of choosing candidates for nomination for the office that
the candidate is seeking, if a primary is required under chapter 153,
and (A) said party endorses the candidate for the office that the
candidate is seeking, (B) the candidate is seeking nomination to the
office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State
Comptroller, State Treasurer or Secretary of the State or the district
office of state senator or state representative and receives at least
fifteen per cent of the votes of the convention delegates present and
voting on any roll-call vote taken on the endorsement or proposed
endorsement of a candidate for the office the candidate is seeking, or
(C) the candidate circulates a petition and obtains the required number
of signatures for filing a candidacy for nomination for (i) the office of
Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State Comptroller,
State Treasurer or Secretary of the State or the district office of state
senator or state representative, pursuant to section 9-400, or (ii) the
municipal office of state senator or state representative, pursuant to section 9-406, whichever is applicable. The State Elections Enforcement Commission shall make any such grants to participating candidates in accordance with the provisions of subsections (d) to (g), inclusive, of this section.

(2) [A] Except as provided in subdivision (6) of this subsection, a participating candidate for nomination to the office of state senator or state representative in 2008, or thereafter, or the office of Governor, Attorney General, State Comptroller, Secretary of the State or State Treasurer in 2010, or thereafter, may apply to the State Elections Enforcement Commission for a grant from the fund under the Citizens' Election Program for a general election campaign:

(A) After the close of the state or district convention or municipal caucus, convention or town committee meeting, whichever is applicable, of the candidate's party that is called for the purpose of choosing candidates for nomination for the office that the candidate is seeking, if (i) said party endorses said candidate for the office that the candidate is seeking and no other candidate of said party files a candidacy with the Secretary of the State in accordance with the provisions of section 9-400 or 9-406, whichever is applicable, (ii) the candidate is seeking election to the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State Comptroller, State Treasurer or Secretary of the State or the district office of state senator or state representative and receives at least fifteen per cent of the votes of the convention delegates present and voting on any roll-call vote taken on the endorsement or proposed endorsement of a candidate for the office the candidate is seeking, no other candidate for said office at such convention either receives the party endorsement or said percentage of said votes for said endorsement or files a certificate of endorsement with the Secretary of the State in accordance with the provisions of section 9-388 or a candidacy with the Secretary of the State in accordance with the provisions of section 9-400, and no other candidate for said office circulates a petition and obtains the required number of signatures for filing a candidacy for nomination for said
office pursuant to section 9-400, (iii) the candidate is seeking election to
the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State
Comptroller, State Treasurer or Secretary of the State or the district
office of state senator or state representative, circulates a petition and
obtains the required number of signatures for filing a candidacy for
nomination for said office pursuant to section 9-400 and no other
candidate for said office at the state or district convention either
receives the party endorsement or said percentage of said votes for
said endorsement or files a certificate of endorsement with the
Secretary of the State in accordance with the provisions of section 9-388
or a candidacy with the Secretary of the State in accordance with the
provisions of section 9-400, or (iv) the candidate is seeking election to
the municipal office of state senator or state representative, circulates a
petition and obtains the required number of signatures for filing a
candidacy for nomination for the office the candidate is seeking
pursuant to section 9-406 and no other candidate for said office at the
caucus, convention or town committee meeting either receives the
party endorsement or files a certification of endorsement with the
town clerk in accordance with the provisions of section 9-391;

(B) After any primary held by such party for nomination for said
office, if the Secretary of the State declares that the candidate is the
party nominee in accordance with the provisions of section 9-440;

(C) In the case of a minor party candidate, after the nomination of
such candidate is certified and filed with the Secretary of the State
pursuant to section 9-452; or

(D) In the case of a petitioning party candidate, after approval by
the Secretary of the State of such candidate's nominating petition
pursuant to section 9-453o.

(3) A participating candidate for nomination to the office of state
senator or state representative at a special election in 2008, or
thereafter, may apply to the State Elections Enforcement Commission
for a grant from the fund under the Citizens' Election Program for a
general election campaign after the close of the district convention or
municipal caucus, convention or town committee meeting of the
candidate's party that is called for the purpose of choosing candidates
for nomination for the office that the candidate is seeking.

(4) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions (1) and (2) of
this subsection, no participating candidate for nomination or election
who changes the candidate's status as a major party, minor party or
petitioning party candidate or becomes a candidate of a different
party, after filing the affidavit required under section 9-703, shall be
eligible to apply for a grant under the Citizens' Election Program for
such candidate's primary campaign for such nomination or general
election campaign for such election. The provisions of this subdivision
shall not apply in the case of a candidate who is nominated by more
than one party and does not otherwise change the candidate's status as
a major party, minor party or petitioning party candidate.

(5) Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection, no candidate
may apply to the State Elections Enforcement Commission for a grant
from the fund under the Citizens' Election Program if such candidate
has been convicted of or pled guilty or nolo contendere to, in a court of
competent jurisdiction, any (A) criminal offense under this title unless
at least eight years have elapsed from the date of the conviction or plea
or the completion of any sentence, whichever date is later, without a
subsequent conviction of or plea to another such offense, or (B) a
felony related to the individual's public office, other than an offense
under this title in accordance with subparagraph (A) of this
subdivision.

(6) A participating candidate may apply to the State Elections
Enforcement Commission for a grant from the fund for a primary
campaign or general election campaign, as applicable, in advance of
the schedule prescribed in subdivision (1) of subsection (g) of this
section for the purpose of receiving preapproval of such application as
a prospective participating candidate.
Sec. 18. Subsection (g) of section 9-706 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):

(g) (1) Any application submitted pursuant to this section for a primary or general election shall be submitted in accordance with the following schedule: (A) By five o'clock p.m. on either the [third] first Wednesday, Thursday or Friday in May of the year that the primary or election will be held at which such participating candidate will seek nomination or election, or (B) by five o'clock p.m. on any subsequent Wednesday, Thursday or Friday of such year, provided no application shall be accepted by the commission after five o'clock p.m. on or after the fourth to last Friday prior to the primary or election at which such participating candidate will seek nomination or election. Not later than five business days following any such Wednesday, Thursday or Friday, as applicable, for participating candidates seeking nomination or election to the office of state senator or state representative, or ten business days following any such Wednesday, Thursday or Friday, as applicable, for participating candidates seeking nomination or election to the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State Comptroller, State Treasurer or Secretary of the State or, in the event of a national, regional or local emergency or local natural disaster, as soon thereafter as is practicable, the commission shall review any application received by such Wednesday, Thursday or Friday, in accordance with the provisions of subsection (d) of this section and prioritized in the order received, and [determine whether such application shall be approved or disapproved] shall approve or disapprove such application. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection, if an application for a general election grant is received during the period beginning at five o'clock p.m. on the Wednesday of the week preceding the week of the last primary application deadline and ending five o’clock p.m. on the last primary application deadline, as set forth in this subsection, the commission shall review such application in accordance with the provisions of subsection (d) of this section and [determine whether it shall be approved or disapproved]
prioritized in the order received and shall approve or disapprove such
application not later than five business days or ten business days, as
applicable, after the first application deadline following the last
primary application deadline. For any such application that is
approved, any disbursement of funds by the commission shall be
made not later than twelve business days prior to any such primary or
general election. From the third week of June in even-numbered years
until the third week in July, the commission shall meet [twice] three
times weekly to determine whether or not to approve applications for
grants if there are pending grant applications. Nothing in this
subdivision shall be construed to prohibit the commission or any
member thereof from conducting a review of such applications
remotely, including, but not limited to, telephonically or via Internet-based
means. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to
prohibit the commission from reviewing grant applications in advance
of the schedule prescribed in this subdivision for the purpose of
preapproving any such application for a prospective participating
candidate, provided payment of any such grant resulting from any
such preapproved application shall remain contingent upon the
occurrence of the events set forth in subdivision (1) or (2), as
applicable, of subsection (a) of this section.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (1) of this
subsection, no application for a special election shall be accepted by
the commission after five o'clock p.m. on or after ten business days
prior to the special election at which such participating candidate will
seek election. Not later than three business days following such
deadline, or, in the event of a national, regional or local emergency or
local natural disaster, as soon thereafter as practicable, the commission
shall review any such application received by such deadline, in
accordance with the provisions of subsection (d) of this section, and
determine whether such application shall be approved or disapproved.
For any such application that is approved, any disbursement of funds
by the commission shall be made not later than seven business days
prior to any such special election.
(3) The commission shall publish such application review schedules and meeting schedules on the commission's website and with the Secretary of the State.

Sec. 19. Subdivision (3) of subsection (c) of section 9-608 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):

(3) In addition to the requirements of subdivision (2) of this subsection, each contributor who makes a contribution to a candidate or exploratory committee for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State Comptroller, Secretary of the State, State Treasurer, state senator or state representative, any political committee authorized to make contributions to such candidates or committees, and any party committee that separately, or in the aggregate, exceeds fifty dollars shall provide with the contribution: (A) The name of the contributor's employer, if any; (B) the contributor's status as a communicator lobbyist, as defined in section 1-91, a member of the immediate family of a communicator lobbyist, a state contractor, a prospective state contractor or a principal of a state contractor or prospective state contractor, as defined in section 9-612, as amended by this act; and (C) a certification that the contributor is not prohibited from making a contribution to such candidate or committee, which certification shall constitute prima facie evidence of such fact. The State Elections Enforcement Commission shall prepare a sample form for such certification by the contributor and shall make it available to treasurers and contributors. Such sample form shall include an explanation of the terms "communicator lobbyist", "principal of a state contractor or prospective state contractor", "immediate family", "state contractor" and "prospective state contractor". The information on such sample form shall be included in any written solicitation conducted by any such committee. If a treasurer receives such a contribution and the contributor has not provided such certification, the treasurer shall: (i) Not later than three business days after receiving the contribution, send a request for the certification to the contributor by certified mail, return receipt requested; (ii) not deposit the contribution until the
treasurer obtains the certification from the contributor, notwithstanding the provisions of section 9-606; and (iii) return the contribution to the contributor if the contributor does not provide the certification not later than fourteen days after the treasurer's written request or at the end of the reporting period in which the contribution was received, whichever is later. No treasurer shall be required to obtain and keep more than one certification from each contributor, unless information certified to by the contributor, other than the amount contributed, changes. If a treasurer deposits a contribution based on a certification that is later determined to be false, the treasurer shall have a complete defense to any action, including but not limited to, any complaint investigated by the State Elections Enforcement Commission or any other investigation initiated by said commission, against such treasurer for the receipt of such contribution.

Sec. 20. Subsection (c) of section 9-712 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):

(c) The commission shall not impose a penalty for the first failure of a treasurer to file any statement or declaration required by this section within the time required. If a treasurer fails to so file any such statement or declaration [required by this section within the time required] a second time, said treasurer shall be subject to a civil penalty, imposed by the commission, of not more than one thousand dollars. [for the first failure to file the statement within the time required and] After such second failure, said treasurer shall be subject to a civil penalty, imposed by the commission, of not more than five thousand dollars for any subsequent such failure.

Sec. 21. Subsection (d) of section 9-7a of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):

(d) (1) The commission shall, subject to the provisions of chapter 67, employ an executive director and such other employees as may be
necessary to carry out the provisions of this section, section 9-7b and
section 9-623 and may apply to the Commissioner of Emergency
Services and Public Protection or to the Chief State's Attorney for
necessary investigatory personnel, which the same are hereby
authorized to provide.

(2) Beginning January 15, 2021, the commission shall employ an
executive director to serve as such for a term not to exceed four years,
except that at the conclusion of such term the commission may
reemploy such person for an additional four years. Not later than
thirty days after each employment or reemployment, as applicable, of
an executive director, the commission shall submit a report to the joint
standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
matters relating to elections, in accordance with section 11-4a, on the
performance of the commission and the executive director thereof
during the immediately preceding term of such executive director.

Sec. 22. Subsections (h) and (i) of section 9-610 of the general
statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
(Effective July 1, 2019):

(h) [On] (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection,
on and after January 1, 2011, no communicator lobbyist, immediate
family member of a communicator lobbyist, agent of a communicator
lobbyist, or political committee established or controlled by a
communicator lobbyist or any such immediate family member or
agent shall knowingly solicit from any individual who is a member of
the board of directors of, an employee of or a partner in, or who has an
ownership interest of five per cent or more in, any client lobbyist that
the communicator lobbyist lobbies on behalf of pursuant to the
communicator lobbyist's registration under chapter 10 [(1)] (A) a
contribution on behalf of a candidate committee or an exploratory
committee established by a candidate for the office of Governor,
 Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State Comptroller, State
Treasurer, Secretary of the State, state senator or state representative, a
political committee established or controlled by any such candidate, a
legislative caucus committee, a legislative leadership committee or a
party committee, or [(2)] (B) the purchase of advertising space in a
program for a fund-raising affair sponsored by a town committee, as
described in subparagraph (B) of subdivision (10) of subsection (b) of
section 9-601a, as amended by this act.

(2) In the case of the spouse of a communicator lobbyist, which
spouse is a member of the staff of a state officer or an employee of a
legislative caucus and is designated treasurer or deputy treasurer of a
candidate committee pursuant to subsection (a) of section 9-602, such
spouse may in the course of his or her duties as such treasurer or
deputy treasurer knowingly solicit contributions and purchases of
advertising space described in subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(i) [No] (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection,
no communicator lobbyist or agent of such lobbyist, or member of the
immediate family of a communicator lobbyist shall bundle
contributions to, [(1)] (A) an exploratory committee or a candidate
committee established by a candidate for nomination or election to the
office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State
Comptroller, State Treasurer, Secretary of the State, state senator or
state representative, [(2)] (B) a political committee established or
controlled by any such candidate, [(3)] (C) a legislative caucus
committee or a legislative leadership committee, or [(4)] (D) a party
commitee.

(2) In the case of the spouse of a communicator lobbyist, which
spouse is a member of the staff of a state officer or an employee of a
legislative caucus and is designated treasurer or deputy treasurer of a
candidate committee pursuant to subsection (a) of section 9-602, such
spouse may in the course of his or her duties as such treasurer or a
deputy treasurer bundle contributions to such candidate committee.

Sec. 23. Subsection (a) of section 9-610 of the general statutes is
repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July
1, 2019):
(a) (1) Any provision of this chapter to the contrary notwithstanding, a candidate committee may join with one or more candidate committees to establish a political committee for the purpose of sponsoring one or more fund-raising events for those candidates. Any individual, other than a candidate benefited, who is eligible and qualifies to serve in accordance with the provisions of subsection (d) of section 9-606 may serve as the treasurer or deputy treasurer of such a political committee. The statements required to be filed by a political committee under this chapter shall apply to any political committee established pursuant to this subsection. After all expenses of the political committee have been paid by its treasurer for each event, he shall distribute all remaining funds from such event to the treasurers of each of the candidate committees which established the political committee. The distribution to each candidate committee shall be made not later than fourteen days after the event, either in accordance with a prior agreement of the candidates or, if no prior agreement was made, in equal proportions to each candidate committee. Any contribution which is made to such political committee shall, for purposes of determining compliance with the limitations imposed by this chapter, be deemed to have been made in equal proportions to each candidate's campaign unless [(1)] (A) a prior agreement was made by the candidates as to the disposition of remaining funds, and [(2)] (B) those who contributed to the political committee were notified of such disposition, in which case the contribution shall be deemed to have been made to each candidate's campaign in accordance with the agreement.

(2) Any provision of this chapter to the contrary notwithstanding, in the case of a candidate who appears on any written, typed or other printed communication, or any web-based written communication, which solicits contributions to benefit any political committee or party committee, the candidate committee of such candidate shall not be required to pay or reimburse such political committee or party committee for its pro rata share of the expenses of such communication, provided such communication shall not promote the
success of such candidate's campaign for nomination or election or promote the defeat of the campaign for nomination or election of any opponent of such candidate.

Sec. 24. Subsections (e) and (f) of section 9-706 of the general statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):

(e) (1) The State Elections Enforcement Commission shall adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, on permissible expenditures under subsection (g) of section 9-607 for qualified candidate committees receiving grants from the fund under sections 9-700 to 9-716, inclusive.

(2) Notwithstanding any regulation adopted pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, the qualified candidate committee of a participating candidate may make de minimis expenditures for the use of any social media account, Internet web site or electronic mail or message account, system, program or contact list of such committee to solicit contributions for the benefit of a legislative caucus committee, legislative leadership committee or party committee.

(f) [If] Whenever a nominated participating candidate dies, withdraws the candidate's candidacy or becomes disqualified to hold the office for which the candidate has been nominated after the commission approves the candidate's application for a grant under this section, the candidate committee of the candidate who is nominated to replace said candidate pursuant to section 9-460 shall be eligible to receive grants from the fund without complying with the provisions of section 9-704, if said replacement candidate (1) files an affidavit under section 9-703 certifying the candidate's intent to abide by the expenditure limits set forth in subsection (c) of section 9-702, (2) in the case of a replacement candidate for election to the office of (A) state senator for a district, collects signatures on a form prescribed by the commission from three hundred electors residing in municipalities included, in whole or in part, in said district, or (B) state representative
for a district, collects signatures on a form prescribed by the commission from one hundred fifty electors residing in municipalities included, in whole or in part, in said district, and (3) notifies the commission on a form prescribed by the commission."

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

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