

**Government Administration and Elections Committee**  
**JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT**

**Bill No.:** SB-387

AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF ONLINE DONATION PLATFORMS FOR

**Title:** POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS.

**Vote Date:** 3/26/2024

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 3/13/2024

**File No.:**

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**SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Government Administration and Elections Committee.

**REASONS FOR BILL:**

Under current state law, online political donation platforms are legally unable to operate for statewide and local political campaigns. The legislation, as amended, aims to exempt from the definition of "contribution" certain specified voluntary payments given to online political donation platforms by contributors. It also exempts such contributions from provisions concerning illegal campaign finance practices.

**RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

Michael Brandi, SEEC:

Comments about certain language within the legislation. Concerning lines 168 through 172, the legislature may want to include an exemption to the definition of expenditure regarding the use of committee funds to allow tip jars on a site it is paying for. Concerning lines 202 through 215, the legislature may want to consider that discounts from businesses be limited in dollar amount, unless all the provision is meant to do is allow the use of tip-jars.

Bob Duff, Senate Majority Leader:

Connecticut is the only state in the country where two of the most prominent online political donation platforms cannot legally operate for state and local political campaigns due to the current interpretation of existing state law. Urges for support.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

Nick Nyhart:

The bill is a technical update to existing law, which will expand options for making online donations and empower small-dollar donors to make their voices heard at the state and local level.

Cheri Quickmire, Common Cause CT Executive Director:

Candidates should have the opportunity to use technology. There is a need for campaign software that is accessible to candidates and support for oversight.

Tom Swan, Connecticut Citizen Action Group Executive Director:

Candidates should be able to access this platform. Disagrees with SEEC testimony and finds the statement that they are willing to work to have their concerns addressed to be disingenuous.

### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

Susan Bradford:

Contributions must be made separate from voluntary payments. Co-mingling campaign contributions with monies through online portals should not be allowed.

Jermaine Cruz:

Urges not to pass

Dr. Linda Dalessio:

Suggests the language will allow the hiding of smurfing—a specific method of money laundering where a large sum of money is split into many smaller sums to avoid detection by authorities—that is currently occurring in campaign finance.

Jennifer Damon:

The bill will only enhance the term known as “smurphing”

Glenn Fuoco:

The people have rights in a free country

Also Opposes:

Krystin D'Amato

Nicholas D'Amato

**Reported by: Lindsay de Brito**

**Date: 4/3/24**