

2012 Updated Program Report Card: Citizens' Election Program (State Elections Enforcement Commission)

Quality of Life Result: Connecticut citizens and candidates have increased confidence in the electoral process and their elected government.

Contribution to the Result: The Citizens' Election Program offers Connecticut residents the opportunity to run for public office by providing public funding to candidates. The elimination of special interest money leads to improvement of public trust in government.

Program Expenditures	Mandated Transfers to General Fund	State Funding	Federal Funding	Other Funding	Total Funding
Actual FY 11: \$23,386,389	\$27,000,000	\$18,373,174(CEF)	0	\$330,331	\$18,703,505
Est. FY 12: \$258,909	None projected	\$10,600,000(CEF)	0	\$76,441	\$10,676,441

Partners: Connecticut General Assembly, Constitutional Offices, DAS, Good Government Organizations

How Much Did We Do?

Performance Measure 1: Increased Campaign Disclosure and Transparency

Increase in Number of eCRIS Filers

Year	Type of committees (total #)	# filing eCRIS	% of total committees
2008	Candidate (347)	169	48%
	Party (372)	117	31%
	Ongoing PAC (457)	68	15%
2010	Candidate (481)	279	58%
	Party (373)	147	39%
	Ongoing PAC (424)	110	26%

Story behind the baseline: The number of committees filing online electronically via eCRIS increased in 2010. Following the November 2008 election, **30%** of all committees who file with SEEC filed using eCRIS. Following the November 2010 election, **42%** of all committees required to file with SEEC filed via eCRIS. Few committees are required to file electronically—only those that raise or spend \$250,000 or more—so

participation is mostly voluntary. However, our agency strongly encourages it as it provides the public with instantaneous campaign disclosure and immediate transparency. Paper filings cost more and delay disclosure. The data contained in the paper filings are entered into a searchable database within one to thirty days of receipt at a cost of \$39 per filing for outsourced data entry—and that discounts staff time needed to process the outsourced data. One hundred and thirty one additional committees filed electronically in 2010—with an average of 5 filings per year, this saved almost \$200 per committee or about \$25,000 in data entry costs, as well as making campaign finance disclosure immediately available. **By increasing the number of committees using eCRIS, Connecticut saves money.**

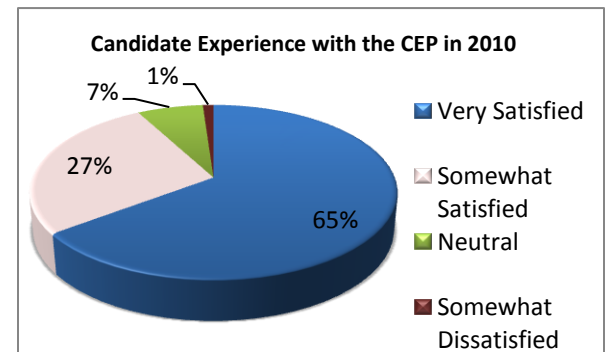
As more committees file electronically via eCRIS, the public has greater access to rapid and complete disclosure via eCRIS, which our IT staff constantly improves with new searching and reporting capabilities. Users are able to view specific receipts and disbursement data as well as search for data across committees. On average, there are more than 400 visits per day to the eCRIS search module on the SEEC website; in 2010, it had over 150,000 visits.

Trend: ▲

How Well Did We Do It?

Performance Measure 2: Continued Candidate Satisfaction

2010 Participating Candidate Survey Results: 92% of respondents were satisfied



Story behind the baseline: The percentage of satisfaction increased in 2010. In the 2008 survey, **76%** of participating candidates responding were somewhat or very satisfied with their experience. Because of cuts to SEEC's budget and staff, as described below, this trend is unlikely to continue.

Trend : ▲ Projected 2012: ▼

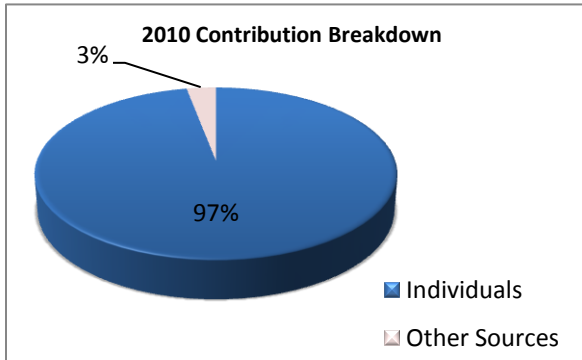
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Is Anyone Better Off?

Performance Measure 3:
Reduction of Special Interest Money in
Elections

2010 Contribution Breakdown



Story behind the baseline: As in 2008, 97% of all contributions to candidate committees in 2010 were from individuals, with only 3% of contributions from other sources. In 2006, before the advent of the CEP, less than half of the contributions made to candidates came from individuals, and more than half of the \$9.3 million raised by candidates came from special interest sources: lobbyists, political committees, and entities. In 2010, as in 2008, an extraordinary 97% of the contributions came from individuals. The high level of participation (70% of all candidates for General Assembly in 2010 participated in the CEP and 60% of all statewide candidates in a primary) was a factor in reducing the number and amount of contributions received from special interest sources.

Trend (General Assembly candidates): ◀▶
Trend (statewide candidates): ▲

Proposed Actions to Turn the Curve:

Performance Measure 1: Increased Campaign Disclosure and Transparency

The Commission will:

- Re-submit proposed legislation mandating e-filing for committees eligible to participate in CEP races. ***The proposal would result in a net fiscal saving to the State due to the elimination of data entry expenses for paper filings of \$39 for each filing. In F.Y. 2010 data entry of all paper filings cost \$109,278.***
- Examine feasibility of automatic issuance of eCRIS PIN numbers, and online training, and maintain Candidate Services outreach and customer support to ensure that the number of committees filing electronically will continue to increase.

Performance Measure 2: Continued Candidate Satisfaction

The level of candidate satisfaction is projected to decrease in 2012 because, based on current resources, staff reductions, and unfilled staff vacancies, SEEC may be unable to maintain services at its current high level, including timely grant application review and training and outreach programs. In order to allow a successful grant season, the SEEC will need: 1) adequate funding to cover operating costs including overtime, 2) retention of SEEC IT personnel necessary to support the grant and disclosure process, 3) realignment of staff, and 4) the ability to have all vacant positions involved in the grant review process filled, trained and available to work. Without these changes and without mandatory eCRIS filing for candidates seeking grants, the Commission

will have great difficulty meeting its statutory deadline for grant review and determination, potentially pushing some candidates' applications past the last date to receive funding.

The Commission would like to:

- Timely complete grant reviews even though the number of grant applications in 2012 is projected to be at the same high level as in 2008-2010. Whereas SEEC previously had 11 positions for review of grant applications, it now has 6 (5 of which are filled), and inadequate funding for overtime; and
- Continue the high level of timely communications with all candidates; Increase the use of online training for candidates and treasurers, but may instead be forced to decrease all training due to staff reductions.

Data Development Agenda

Performance Measure 3: Reduction of Special Interest Money in Elections

Commission staff are studying what effect mandatory transfers totaling \$58.5 million from the Citizens' Election Fund to the General Fund in fiscal years 2009-2011 and the reduction of CEF funding from \$18.6 million to \$10.6 million in FY 2012 (PA 11-6) may have on the sufficiency of the Fund to issue full grants to qualified statewide and General Assembly candidates in 2014, and thus on the reduction of special interest money in elections. **If an insufficiency is declared, that would trigger a statutory provision allowing special interest money to potentially flood back into the electoral process.**