

**Since 2005,
when it was signed into law, the Connecticut
Citizens' Election Program (CEP)
has been providing grants to run
election campaigns for state offices.**

Connecticut voters risk losing this gem of a nationally acclaimed clean public funding program for elections to state offices. Our major political parties tried to get rid of CEP in 2015 and 2016 and may try again, confident that Connecticut voters won't object...because most are unaware of it.

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut urges everyone to become aware of CEP without delay and to actively inform others.

1. What is the Citizens' Election Program (CEP)?

- In 2005, as a reaction to elections-related actions that landed Gov. John Rowland in federal prison, the Connecticut General Assembly passed and Gov. Jodi Rell signed into law the Citizens' Election Program (CEP).
- CEP provides public funding to run election campaigns for seats in the state legislature and for state offices.
- CEP is administrated by the non-partisan State Election Enforcement Commission (SEEC).
- CEP grantees sign a contract to fund their campaigns with CEP funds.
- Money not spent on the campaign (all expenses must be documented) must be returned to the Citizens' Election Fund.
- All current state officers (Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, Treasurer, Comptroller, and Attorney General) ran their election campaigns on CEP grants.
- About 89% of the current Representatives and Senators ran for their seat in the Connecticut General Assembly on CEP funding. (Running on public funding is voluntary).

2. How is CEP funded?

- CEP funds come from the sale of abandoned properties in the state (not from taxes) and from donations (negligible) to the Citizens' Election Fund.
- CEP constitutes 0.0001% of the state budget.

3. Who can get a CEP grant for their election campaign?

- Anyone who *qualifies* to run for a seat in the Connecticut House or Senate or for the office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, Treasurer, Comptroller, or Attorney General.

4. How does one qualify?

By raising a specified amount in \$5 to \$100 contributions from *individuals*.

- \$ 5,000 for the House of Representatives (at least 150 contributors from the candidate's district).
- \$ 15,000 for the Senate (at least 300 contributors from the candidate's district).
- \$ 75,000 for Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State Governor, Treasurer, Comptroller, and Attorney General (\$67,500 from in-state contributors).
- \$250,000 for Governor (\$225,000 must be in-state contributors).
- Candidates may contribute to their campaign, but that amount will be subtracted from their CEP grant.



5. How much money does a candidates receive from CEP?

- \$ 28,150 to run for a seat in the House of Representatives.
- \$ 95,710 to run for a seat in the Senate.
- \$ 812,550 to run for Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, Treasurer, Comptroller, and Attorney General.
- \$6,500,400 to run for Governor.
- Candidates who have no challengers receive partial funding.
- Funds are also available for primary campaigns.

6. Benefits of CEP

- Civic-minded individuals are encouraged to run for state offices.
- Challengers and incumbents receive equal funding to run for the same office; this encourages challengers to run and incumbents to improve their performance.
- CEP grantees, when in office, owe no favors to special interests.
- CEP grantees don't need to court special interests for contributions for re-election.
- CEP grantees can focus on their constituents.
- Contributors of modest means acquire importance, because individuals contributing between \$5 and \$100 are required for qualifying for CEP funding.
- SEEC monitors how candidates spend CEP money, assuring strict accountability.
- Connecticut is known nationally for being an example of clean state elections.

7. Threats to CEP

- Various groups wish to revert to special-interest-funding for state elections.
- Democratic Party and Republican Party leaderships have attempted to divert CEP funds to non-election purposes.
- A lack of support/constituency for the Citizens' Election Program (because few Connecticut voters are aware of CEP).
- The Supreme Court's 2010 Citizens United vs. FEC ruling encourages special interests to tilt Connecticut state elections their way by seeking to provide campaign funding.

8. Citizens' Election Proud (CEProud), the LWVCT 2016-2019 initiative

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut has committed to:

- Raise awareness in our state about the Citizens' Election Program.
- Build a constituency for CEP.
- Encourage civic-minded people to run on CEP funding for state offices.
- Encourage people to become involved in the elections process by contributing in the \$5-\$100 range to help candidates qualify for CEP funding.
- Work with the General Assembly to secure the Citizens' Election Program against cuts and raids.

LWVCT believes that CEP is a load-bearing wall that upholds our electoral home. Individuals and Organizations are invited (urged!) to express their support for our Citizens' Election Program at **ceproud.wordpress.com**

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