

Government Administration and Elections Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1225

AN ACT CONCERNING CITIZENS' ELECTION PROGRAM GRANTS FOR

Title: GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES.

Vote Date: 3/27/2023

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/20/2023

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Government Administration and Elections Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

SB 1225 aims to generate a voucher system (grant money) in conjunction with the Citizens' Election Program (CEP) for gubernatorial candidates participating in the Governor election prior to state conventions. Additionally, this bill's overall objective is to expand campaigning resources (money) to a variety of candidates; allowing more candidates and grass roots organizations to run. Moreover, this system has proved to be successful in Maine, Washington, and California where they have seen increased diverse donor (and election) participation. Therefore, this bill would further enable people of color and lower-income residents of Connecticut to participate (and donate) in gubernatorial elections, thus allowing the imperative and diverse representation of the state to avidly participate in governmental processes.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

Strike all; includes proposals from State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) (originally from SB 1188)

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Michael Brandi, Executive Director, State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC)

Supports; they like the idea of utilizing a money voucher system for candidates before the convention in conjunction with Citizens Election Program. These systems have been utilized in other states such as in Washington, Maine, and California. Vouchers have led to the diversification of the monetary donor pool and were more representative of the electorate than monetary contributors. 90% of voucher users voted in the election compared to 43% that

did not use vouchers. Since voucher programs have been found to increase active participation among younger residents, people of color, and low-income residents, they support the bill.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Pamela Klem, Campaign Finance Specialist, CT League of Women Voters

Pamela support SB 1225 because this legislation (vouchers) would be an innovative structure enabling grass roots organizations candidates to access funding sooner and engaging voters earlier in the election cycle, too.

Cheri Quickmire, Executive Director, Common Cause in Connecticut

Cheri supports SB 1225 because the voucher system increases “donors donating to municipal elections and the number of candidates in those elections.” Additionally, they recommend additional research due to the ambiguity of how this would function within the Citizens’ Election Program.

Tom Swan, Executive Director, Connecticut Citizen Action Group

Tom supports the concept of SB 1225 because it would enable candidates to access additional resources prior to their convention. Additionally, they have questions how it would build off of the success of the Citizens’ Election Program.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Anonymous, Concerned Citizen

Anonymous opposes this bill because “they are all bad.” Anonymous further states their concerns regarding this bill saying that “the election was fraudulent” and that the residents of Connecticut are not being represented by their officials.

Anonymous

Oppose SB 1225 because they are “nonsense” and the General Assembly must return to “common sense.”

Reported by: Gregory Chipchak

Date: 03-27-2023