

State Elections Enforcement Commission

Citizens' Election Program



Press Release

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SEEC REACTS TO SUPREME COURT DECISION

HARTFORD, CT – April 4, 2014 – The Connecticut State Elections Enforcement Commission today issued the following statement from Commission Chair Anthony J. Castagno regarding the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling earlier this week in the case of *McCutcheon v. FEC* that strikes down the federal cap on aggregate campaign contributions that individuals can give to candidates and party committees.

“We are troubled by this decision from the Supreme Court and believe it further erodes our country’s founding principles that the government exists for all the people, not just a few. It rejects the concerns of the majority of Americans who oppose the huge influx of money and its potential effect on the political process.”

“Fortunately, however, Connecticut’s public campaign financing system is one of the best in the country, with strong disclosure requirements for all candidates and tight restrictions on fundraising and expenditures by those candidates receiving public campaign financing. With almost 80% of our legislature and 100% of constitutional officers elected without special interest money, Connecticut’s campaign finance system can withstand decisions like *McCutcheon*.”

“Connecticut’s public financing program, the Citizens’ Election Program, continues to enable candidates to run campaigns free of special interest money. But the system has been and continues to be threatened by ever more intrusive decisions from the Supreme Court.”

“In order to combat the Supreme Court’s decision in *Citizens United*, many attempts have been and continue to be made to enable political party committees to counter independent expenditures. This is another step down that road, but it is a troubling step that will increase the overall amount of money in campaigns. Connecticut steadfastly maintains its state contractor and lobbyist restrictions and its base contribution limits. As long as party money is not tainted by those sources, party support is preferable to unregulated support from special interests.”

“Elections can be corrupted by the influence of money. We, as citizens of Connecticut, have an interest and an obligation in upholding the integrity of the political process, preventing even the appearance of corruption and keeping the public’s faith in the integrity of the electoral process.”

“How this case affects Connecticut law is something that we are reviewing and we will continue to pay close attention to what this means for campaign finance law, in this state and nationally.”

The State Elections Enforcement Commission operates to ensure the integrity of the state’s electoral process. The Commission is responsible for ensuring independent, non-partisan enforcement of all election law in Connecticut as well as providing campaign finance advice and serving as the repository for campaign finance reports. It also serves as administrator to the Citizens’ Election Program.

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