

# State Elections Enforcement Commission

## Citizens' Election Program



Press Release

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### **STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION ANNOUNCES FIRST CLEAN ELECTIONS GRANT TO A GREEN PARTY CANDIDATE FOR SPECIAL ELECTION**

HARTFORD, CT – February 13, 2019 – The State Elections Enforcement Commission (the “Commission”) voted at its February 13, 2019 special meeting to approve a public grant payment under the Citizens’ Election Program (“CEP”) for a candidate in the February 26, 2019 special election in the 39th House District. The Commission approved state representative candidate Mirna Martinez (G – 39<sup>th</sup> District) for a special election grant. Ms. Martinez is the first Green Party candidate to receive a public grant in the CEP’s twelve-year history, for regular or special elections.

The CEP is a voluntary program that allows qualifying candidates for the General Assembly and statewide offices to receive full public financing in regular and special elections. To qualify for public campaign financing, candidates must demonstrate they have adequate support from the public. In special elections, candidates for state representative accomplish this by raising \$3,800 from at least 113 individuals residing in municipalities in their districts. Participating candidates may only accept small dollar contributions from certain individuals—the maximum contribution is \$250—and no contributions from state contractors or PACs.

Candidates who have been nominated by a minor party, such as the Green Party, must additionally demonstrate public support either through prior vote totals or through petitioning. For candidates that need to petition to demonstrate support, the eligible minor party candidate who has achieved ballot status in the current election may qualify for a grant through the use of nominating petitions. If that candidate collects signatures from a number of electors equaling at least 15% of the votes cast for that office in the prior election (but less than 20%), the eligible minor party candidate may qualify to receive 2/3 of the full grant for the special election. That amount is \$14,075, which is the amount awarded to Ms. Martinez.

Minor party candidates who receive less than the full grant amount can continue to raise and spend additional contributions, known as “differential contributions,” which must meet the criteria for qualifying contributions, up to the amount of the full applicable grant for the special election for that office. Minor party candidates who receive a grant and report a deficit in post-election disclosure statements may also be eligible to receive supplemental grant money depending on the percentage of votes received by such candidate.

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