

State Elections Enforcement Commission

Citizens' Election Program



Press Release

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STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION ANNOUNCES SECOND GRANTS OF SEASON

HARTFORD, CT – June 3, 2020 – The State Elections Enforcement Commission (the “Commission”) voted at its June 3, 2020 regular meeting to approve public grant payments under the Citizens’ Election Program (“CEP”) for candidates in the August 11, 2020 primary and the November 3, 2020 regular election.

The Commission determined that state representative candidates Whitt Betts (R – 78th District), Holly Cheeseman (R – 37th District), James Feehan (R – 120th District), Jane Garibay (D – 60th District), Jillian Gilchrest (D – 18th District), Irene Haines (R – 34th District), Sherry Haller (D – 20th District), Geoffrey Luxenberg (D – 12th District), Cara Pavalock-D’Amato (R – 77TH District), David Rutigliano (R – 123rd District), Pam Salamone (R – 103rd District), Scott Storms (R – 60th District), Stephanie Thomas (D – 143rd District), Jim Townsley (R – 30th District), Gary Turco (D – 27th District), Fred Wilms (R – 142nd District), Michael Winkler (D – 56th District), and Tami Zawistowski (R – 61st District) were eligible to receive CEP grants. The Commission also determined that state senate candidates Saud Anwar (D – 3rd District), Julie Kushner (D – 24th District), Martin Looney (D – 11th District), James Maroney (D – 14th District), Cathy Osten (D – 19th District), and Steve Weir (R – 19th District) were eligible to receive CEP grants.

The CEP is a voluntary program which allows qualifying candidates for General Assembly to receive full public financing for their campaigns. To qualify for public campaign financing, candidates must demonstrate that they have substantial support from the public. Candidates for state representative accomplish this by raising \$5,300 from at least 150 individuals residing in municipalities in their districts. Candidates for state senate accomplish this by raising \$16,000 from at least 300 individuals residing in municipalities in their districts. Participating candidates for General Assembly may only accept small dollar contributions from certain individuals—the maximum contribution is \$270—and no contributions from state contractors or PACs. General election grant amounts are up to \$30,575 for state representative candidates and up to \$103,955 for state senate candidates.

The CEP was designed, in part, to reduce the influence of special interests in state politics while encouraging grassroots support of campaigns. In its twelfth year of providing public funding to General Assembly candidates, the CEP continues to provide a seawall against the rising tide of special interest money in Connecticut elections.

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