

State Elections Enforcement Commission

Citizens' Election Program



Press Release

Press Contact:
Joshua Foley
860-256-2962
joshua.foley@ct.gov

FINAL PRIMARY GRANTS OF SEASON AWARDED; NEARLY 100% OF PRIMARY CANDIDATES PARTICIPATE IN CEP; MORE GRANTS AWARDED EARLIER THAN EVER

HARTFORD, CT – July 24, 2020 – The State Elections Enforcement Commission (the Commission) voted at its July 24, 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 CEP saw an unprecedented participation rate by this year's primary candidates with 27 of 28 (96%) electing to join the clean elections program. This year there were 14 primaries (11 House/3 Senate).

The Commission determined that state representative candidates Tony Barr (D – 126th District), Ethan Book (R – 128th District), Vincent Candelora (R – 86th District), Nicole Klarides Ditria (R – 105th District), Kathy Grant (D – 87th District), Brandon McGee (D – 5th District), and Pam Patalano (D – 45th District) were eligible to receive CEP grants. The Commission also determined that state senate candidates April Capone (D – 34th District) and William Duff (D – 26th District) were eligible to receive CEP grants.

Candidates, treasurers, and SEEC Commissioners and staff have all worked together to process more grants in the first nine weeks of the grant season than in any cycle since the inception of the CEP—by a large margin. Twenty-four percent (24%) more General Assembly grants were awarded in the first nine weeks than the previous high-water mark set in 2018 (155 to 125). Given that so many of the people involved were quarantining at home, fundraising online, and Zooming into meetings and meet-and-greets, this counts as a remarkable achievement. This is the second cycle in which SEEC has implemented Pre-Application Reviews (PARs) to pre-approve grant applications, and the first cycle in which it was widely used. Additionally, staff worked with committees to get their online fundraising pages pre-approved early. Despite the pandemic, more than one hundred and fifty committees have met their fundraising goals and are all done with fundraising for the entire election.

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.

For more information please contact Joshua Foley at joshua.foley@ct.gov.