



# PRESS RELEASE

August 12, 2026

## STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION AWARDS TWELFTH 2026 GENERAL ELECTION CEP GRANTS

HARTFORD, CT – The State Elections Enforcement Commission (the “Commission”) voted at its August 12, 2026 regular meeting to approve public grant payments under the Citizens’ Election Program (“CEP”) for candidates in the November 3, 2026 general election.

The Commission determined that state representative candidates Matthew Blumenthal (D – 147<sup>th</sup> District), Mary Ann Connelly (R – 101<sup>st</sup> District), Lucy Dathan (D – 142<sup>nd</sup> District), Amiel Goldberg (D – 149<sup>th</sup> District), Anne Hughes (D – 135<sup>th</sup> District), Dominique Johnson (D – 143<sup>rd</sup> District), Laurie Sweet (D – 91<sup>st</sup> District), Ed Vachovetz (R – 109<sup>th</sup> District), Angelina M. Wagner (D – 51<sup>st</sup> District), and Steven B. Winter (D – 94<sup>th</sup> District) were eligible to receive CEP grants. The Commission also determined that state senate candidate Jorge Cabrera (D – 17<sup>th</sup> District) was eligible to receive a CEP grant. Statewide candidate Erick Russell (D – State Treasurer) was also determined to be eligible to receive a grant.

The CEP is a voluntary public financing program designed to help candidates for the General Assembly and statewide Constitutional offices run competitive campaigns without relying on large private contributors. To participate, candidates must demonstrate that they have substantial local support from the public by raising small-dollar contributions from individuals.

- Candidates for state representative accomplish this by raising \$6,700 in contributions from individuals, with at least 150 coming from individuals residing in municipalities in their districts.
- Candidates for state senate must raise \$20,100 in contributions from individuals, with at least 300 coming from individuals residing in municipalities in their districts.
- Candidates for Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of the State, State Comptroller, and State Treasurer must raise \$100,700 in small dollar contributions of which \$90,600 must come from in-state contributors.

Participating candidates may only accept small dollar contributions from certain individuals—the maximum contribution is \$340—and no contributions from state contractors or PACs. Once qualified, candidates may no longer fundraise but are eligible for substantial public grants:

- For state representative candidates, up to \$38,575;
- For state senate candidates, up to \$131,155; and
- For statewide candidates (other than Governor), up to \$562,875 for primaries and up to \$1,125,750 for the general election.

In 2005, Connecticut enacted the CEP in response to public outcry over several high-profile corruption scandals involving state elected officials. In addition to reducing the opportunity for corruption, the public financing program allows ordinary citizens to run for office by reducing reliance on special interests, fostering cleaner, more representative elections. In its eighteenth year of providing public funding, the CEP continues to provide a seawall against the rising tide of dark money in Connecticut elections and a critical, ongoing effort to restore the public’s trust in the institutions of democratic governance.