



PRESS RELEASE

September 10, 2026

STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION AWARDS SIXTEENTH 2026 GENERAL ELECTION CEP GRANTS

HARTFORD, CT – The State Elections Enforcement Commission (the “Commission”) voted at its September 10, 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 Christopher Aniskovich (R – 35th District), William Buckbee (R – 67th District), Michelle Cunningham (D – 53rd District), Jaime S. Foster (D – 57th District), Jonathan Goldstein (R – 150th District), Carol Hall (R – 59th District), Roland Lemar (D – 96th District), James Mol (D – 61st District), Thomas O’Dea (R – 125th District), Brandon Sabbag (R – 139th District), Chris Stewart (R – 51st District), Christopher Tierinni (R – 10th District), and Toni Walker (D – 93rd District) were eligible to receive CEP grants. The Commission also determined that state senate candidates John-Paul Dorais (R – 17th District), Charles Ferraro (R – 33rd District), Herron Gaston (D – 23rd District), Elliott Hughes (R – 3rd District), Timothy Knotts (R – 2nd District), Alphonse Paolillo (D – 11th District), and Gary Winfield (D – 10th District) were eligible to receive CEP grants. Statewide candidates Jennifer Tooker (R—State Comptroller) and Fred Wilms (R – State Treasurer) were also determined to be eligible to receive grants.

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, 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.