



State of Connecticut
State Elections Enforcement Commission
20 Trinity Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

RE: Proposed Declaratory Ruling 2019-02: Use of Campaign Funds to Offset Candidate's Childcare Costs.

Dear Honorable Commission Members:

I write to comment on Proposed Declaratory Ruling 2019-02, which was submitted by former candidate Caitlin Clarkson Pereira, who ran for a House seat in Connecticut. The Connecticut State Elections Enforcement Commission should allow candidates to use campaign funds for childcare expenses they incur as a result of running for office regardless of their participation in the Citizens' Election Program (CEP). Denying candidates the right to use their campaign funds that they raise once they have been approved to receive grant monies from the Citizens' Election Fund (CEF) has the effect of discouraging candidates from participating in the CEP in general, but also provides an advantage to candidates who do not participate in the program since they will be able to use the funds they raise at any point during the campaign.

First, it's laudable that Connecticut provides a program such as the CEP, which allows candidates the opportunity to run for office on an even playing field. However, the proposed ruling states that candidates can use their campaign funds for childcare, but only up to the point that they are approved for grant money. The ability to use campaign funds for childcare should not be limited to once the grant is approved. Surely a candidate would need to use childcare later in a campaign when the grant funds would have been deposited into a candidate's account.

Please allow Connecticut candidates to use their campaign funds for childcare expenses just as so many other states have recently allowed. It is vital to our democracy that candidates who are working parents be given the level playing field to pursue public office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Morgan Lamandre".

Morgan Lamandre