



WHAT IS THE ILLINOIS CLEAN ELECTIONS ACT?

The **Illinois Clean Elections Act (House HB 3228 and Senate SB 1607)** is a voluntary public funding system for candidates for all state offices. Its goal is to reverse the tide of private special interest money flowing into public office. It allows candidates to run for office without engaging in extensive fundraising and without self-funding their own campaigns. This makes a run for office more accessible.

To receive public funds, candidates must prove they have grassroots support in their district by collecting a set number of **\$5 or \$10 Qualifying Contributions** from **individual voters** in their district.

Candidates also agree to limit their spending to the amount received from the Illinois Clean Election Fund.

How will it work?

Each candidate who voluntarily chooses to participate in Illinois Clean Elections system would follow three simple steps to qualify for public funds:

- 1) Demonstrate grassroots support by collecting \$5 Qualifying Contributions from voters within the candidate's district.
- 2) Agree not to raise or spend any private money.
- 3) Agree to limit spending to the amount received from the Illinois Clean Election Fund.

Candidates who qualify would receive an equal and limited amount of public funds with which to run their campaigns. If they are outspent by their opposition, they may receive additional funds.

Where do candidates get their money today?

In Illinois, candidates typically receive most of their money from corporations, lobbyists, or PACs who are generally motivated by exerting influence over state

contracts or issues. In 2006, 60% of the money was contributed by organizations rather than individuals.

How much does it cost to get elected?

In 2006, **\$745,000** was the average amount of money contributed to elect a State Senator and **\$358,500** to elect a State Representative.

Who contributes?

90% of the money was in contributions of \$250 - \$3,000 representing big money contributors.¹

¹ National Institute on Money in State Politics – Follow the Money Trail in Illinois.

<http://tinyurl.com/followthemoneyIllinois>



Isn't this just welfare for politicians?

No. Candidates must work hard to get small donations from hundreds of constituents. In fact the current system costs Illinois citizens millions of dollars.

*"People who say the public shouldn't have to pay for elections are missing the point: The American people **already pay** for elections – in ways that favor incumbents and special interests....Public Financing will cost us only a fraction of what the current system costs". - Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL) - 3/20/07*

Are "Clean Elections" campaign limitations constitutional?

Yes, The system of "Clean Elections" does not limit free speech, as candidates "opt in" on a completely voluntary basis.

Can a "Clean Elections" candidate compete against a well-funded incumbent or other opponent?

We realize that it's potentially difficult. That's why we also recommend "Campaign Finance Reform" limiting campaign **contributions** for all other candidates. While it is unconstitutional to impose limits on campaign *spending* – experience in other states like Maine and Arizona has shown that **even incumbents are willing to participate as clean elections candidates**. In 2006, 82% of all state candidates in

Maine and 60% of candidates in Arizona ran as "clean elections" candidates.

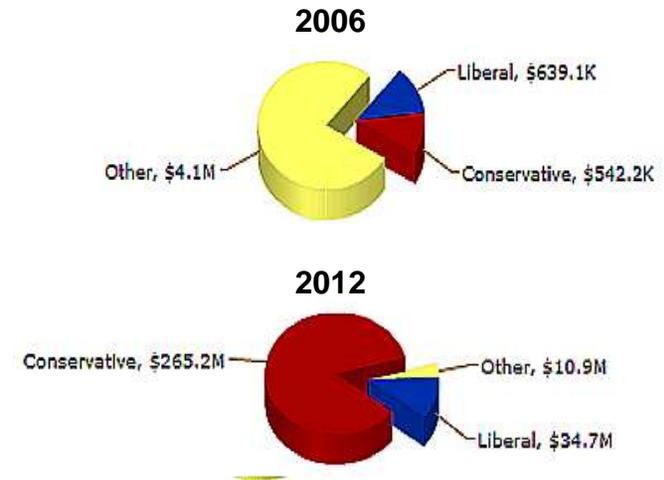
How are "Clean Elections" funded?

In some states like Arizona, citizens contribute to the fund as a voluntary check-off on their State Income Tax Form. Other potential sources: Abandoned Property Trust Funds, interest on unspent public funds, and fines from violations of election laws. Experience has shown that we can publicly finance elections **without** raising taxes.

The amounts spent on all campaigns decrease when **clean elections** are implemented. Public Citizen, a Washington D.C. Public Interest group, reports that states spend between \$2 and \$6 per voting-age resident for clean elections.

\$\$\$ Influence after Citizens United

The *Citizens United* ruling in 2010 unleashed corporations to spend unlimited amounts of money in elections, often without disclosing the donors. These graphs compare the monetary contributions of non-profit, 501(c)(4) tax exempt organizations on the political process before and after the *Citizens United* ruling:



(OpenSecrets.org: tinyurl.com/compare2006-2012)

The numbers show that 2012 spending was about sixty times higher than in 2006 (\$300,000,000 versus \$5,200,000), and came mostly from conservatives.

(OpenSecrets.org: tinyurl.com/sixtytimeshigher)

Why Only Paper Ballots?

In a recent poll, 64% of likely voters said they had heard about “some type of problem” with electronic voting machines. Haven't you? Unlike home PCs and business computers that accomplish a variety of tasks for months or years without problems, voting machines are unreliable. They fail to start, freeze-up during voting or just plain crash.

Electronic voting machines and systems are vulnerable to security breaches during manufacture, after they are purchased, while being serviced and stored, during Early Voting and on Election Day.

Paper Ballots are essential to Clean Elections as the only way to ensure that a reliable record of every vote cast is preserved.

What do Legislators say about Clean Elections?

“As a Clean Election legislator, I find myself being lobbied a lot less than traditional candidates. It’s a lot easier if someone is trying to pressure you to say ‘I owe my allegiance to the taxpayers of the State of Maine and not to any special interest group.’”

- Rep. John Patrick, (D) Rumford

“Most of the people in my district cannot afford to give a candidate \$250 to run for office, but they can participate in the \$5 Qualifying Contribution effort. By contributing \$5, my constituents can invest in Maine’s democratic process, and free me up to do what I enjoy most about campaigning: meeting with voters on their doorstep to discuss the issues.”

- Rep. James Annis, (R) Dover-Foxcroft

How will Clean Elections and Campaign Finance Reform benefit every citizen in Illinois?

“Clean elections has far-reaching consequences beyond limiting campaign spending and curbing corruption--it's been called the 'reform that makes all other reforms possible.' It hits on almost every political issue because it impacts the basic functioning of our government.

“Clean elections actually saves the public money—

lots of it. Although there is a cost to the program, far more money is saved because elected officials will no longer use public funds to pay back their donors many times over- sometimes hundreds or thousands of times over - for their electoral contributions. The paybacks are the form of subsidies, non-bid contracts, pork, regulations changes, tax breaks, and so on -- all ways the special interests feed at the public trough. There may be no better way to cut government spending on corporate giveaways--vast transfers of wealth from the public treasure to wealthy stockholders. The public gains by not losing.”

- George Lakoff

What can we citizens do to help Turn the Tide?

Illinois Legislators need to hear from voters that we demand a tidal change in the way our State Officers and Legislature conduct the people’s business!

- ❑ **Contact your State Senator and Representative and tell him/her – we need to Turn the Tide on Big Money in Illinois Politics.**
- ❑ **Ask them to support the Illinois Clean Elections Act in the House HB3228 and SB 1670 in the Senate.**
- ❑ **Learn more—visit our website <http://ballot-integrity.org/>**

Illinois Ballot Integrity Project

Meetings Open to the Public

2nd Wednesday of each month - 7 p.m

Check our website for location.



**HELP TURN THE TIDE
WASH BIG MONEY OUT OF POLITICS**

LET'S CLEAN UP SPRINGFIELD AND FLUSH

- **LOBBYISTS**
- **INFLUENCE PEDDLERS**
- **BACK-ROOM BOYS**
- **CORPORATE BIG WIGS**
- **PACs (Pandering and Corruption)**



DOWN THE DRAIN!