

## A PROPOSAL FOR PUBLIC FINANCING OF ELECTIONS FOR STATE POLITICAL OFFICES IN NEW YORK

WHEREAS, this legislature has concluded that financing elections to state offices by and through private campaign contributions corrupts and has the potential to further corrupt the political process and presents the strong impression that successful candidates are beholden to those who have financed their campaigns, not responsible for advocating for the public interest.

WHEREAS, this legislature has the authority to regulate state elections in New York and insure that they are held in a manner which does not corrupt the political process and furthers and strengthens our democratic values;

WHEREAS, this legislature finds that citizen participation in political campaigns is critical to a democracy and our state has a long history of such participation and the legislature wishes to encourage such participation in every way except through the donation of money by individuals and/or businesses to political campaigns, and.

WHEREAS to support and strengthen our democracy, New York State shall hereinafter finance all campaigns for State offices, specifically for Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General and Comptroller and campaigns for seats in the New York State Senate and Assembly as set forth below:

### Definitions:

A "designated party" is one which gained at least 7.5% of the statewide vote for the office in question in the last state-wide election for that office

1. Each candidate who qualifies for a primary from a designated party shall be allotted the following sums for his/her primary campaign.

Governor - \$2.5 million

Lt. Governor - \$1.25 million

Attorney General - \$2 million

Comptroller - \$1.5 million

2. A candidate who wins his/her designated party primary shall be eligible to receive an additional sum for the general election as follows:

Governor - \$5 million  
Lt. Governor - \$2 million  
Attorney General - \$3.5 million  
Comptroller - \$2.5 million

3. Candidates running on a party slate are each entitled to receive the sums set forth above.
4. Candidates from any other party shall be free to raise money to the limit set for state-supported candidates for that position.
5. Candidates running on the line of a designated party in a general election may not appear on more than one non-designated party slate and, in furtherance of that slate, s/he may not accept any further public or private campaign contributions.
6. Each candidate for the State Senate from a designated political party in a contested general election race shall be entitled to \$750,000.
7. Each candidate for the Assembly from a designated political party in a contested race shall be entitled to \$400,000.
8. Candidates running in non-contested general elections for either the State Senate or the state Assembly shall be entitled to receive one-third of the sum available to a candidate in a contested general election race, as set forth in paras. 6 & 7 above.
9. Persons seeking seats in either the State Senate or the State Assembly from a non-qualifying party may raise from private sources as much money as the limit the State shall contribute to each designated party candidate, provided records of the name, address and occupation of those making each such contribution shall be submitted by a campaign committee organized by that candidate and further provided that no campaign contribution in excess of \$5,000 shall be accepted by any such candidate.
10. Where qualifying parties have two or more candidates seeking the party's nomination in a primary for State Senate or State Assembly, each candidate who qualifies for the primary ballot and runs as such shall be entitled to \$200,000 in state funding and may contribute no more than \$150,000 of either his/her own funds or raised contributions toward such a race, provided that each such candidate submits records of the name, address and occupation of those making each such

contribution and further provided that no campaign contribution in excess of \$5,000 shall be accepted by any such candidate.

11. Each candidates entitled to receive public funds shall be provided such funds within thirty days of their presentation of proof of campaign-related expenditures.

12. Funds to finance publicly funded elections shall be raised through [a] a surcharge on the state income tax of .25% for all taxpayers who have taxable income of more than \$600,000 in each year and shall be maintained in a dedicated fund administered by the Comptroller's office and [b] a check off on New York State income tax forms by which taxpayers may contribute up to \$5.00 from the tax they otherwise owe to the public funding account, as described below.

13. No political action committees shall be permitted to contribute campaign funds to any of the candidates receiving state funds as set forth above. No political action committee shall be permitted to coordinate expenditures of its funds with those of any candidate receiving state funds as set forth above,

14. a. Each candidate receiving state funds as set forth above shall submit a sworn statement that s/he has fully complied with this law and any person who submits a knowingly false statement shall so commit a Class D Felony and shall be punishable by a minimum of three years imprisonment and a maximum of 5 years imprisonment.

b. Any person who submits false statements or documents in furtherance of any reporting requirements developed by the Secretary of State to implement this legislation shall so commit a Class D Felony and shall be punishable by a minimum of three years imprisonment and a maximum of 5 years imprisonment.

15. Within ninety days of the enactment of this legislation, the Secretary of State shall promulgate implementing regulations consistent with its provisions.

16. This legislation shall be effective and govern the conduct of the 2018 statewide elections and each state election thereafter.

Proposed by Citizen Action Network – Orange County, 1/31/17