



Why do we need campaign finance reform in New York State?

- New York's campaign contribution limits are sky high
- Loopholes allow corporations, businesses, special interests to contribute even more money to candidates
- No special rules apply to lobbyists or state contractors
- Enforcement of present laws is lax and ineffective
- Floods of soft money are allowed to flow into loosely regulated "housekeeping accounts"
- More transparency is needed--disclosure laws are insufficient and unenforced

What are the results of the present campaign finance laws?

- Lax laws create an environment in which influence and access can be bought by wealthy individuals, corporations, unions, lobbyists and other organizations
- The influence of money in politics eats away at the public's faith in government
- Legislators spend inordinate amounts of time raising money to finance their campaigns
- People who would seek office are prevented from doing so by lack of access to funds

What can be done?

- Enact Fair Elections (see reverse side)
- Reform our present laws, including:
 - Reduction of all contribution limits
 - Special limits on contributions by lobbyists
 - Close loopholes and place appropriate limits on corporations and unions
 - Ban or significantly limit party housekeeping accounts.
 - Clarify ban on personal use of campaign funds by candidates,
 - Significantly improve disclosure, including information about political expenditures independent of the candidate's campaign;
 - Increased and more timely reporting of contributions and expenditures, especially immediately prior to an election;
 - New reporting requirements for bundlers of contributions;
 - Reporting of contributor's occupation and employer ;
 - Immediate internet disclosure of alleged violations of campaign finance laws and dispositions;
 - An independent, nonpartisan, adequately financed enforcement body, either within or a separate entity from the Board of Elections, including
 - Power and obligation to conduct independent audits;
 - Subpoena power;
 - Penalties should be substantially increased to further deter noncompliance;
 - Automatic enforcement and collection of civil penalties by administrative action, as opposed to court action.

Why do we need Fair Elections?

Fair Elections—“matching grants” that multiply the impact of small donations produces positive results:

Studies of the New York City system have found:

- The number of overall contributors and the number of small donors increased.
- Candidates who participated relied on a greater number of smaller donors than did nonparticipants.
- The program encouraged candidates to combine fundraising and voter outreach efforts.
- The system promoted voter choice by enabling a diverse pool of candidates with substantial grassroots support but little access to large donors to run competitive campaigns.
- The system boosted competition by enabling greater spending parity between candidates.
- Candidates reached out to their own constituents rather than focusing all their attention on wealthy out-of-district donors
- There is greater participation in elections, evidenced by small donor contributions to city candidates from a much broader array of City neighborhoods than contributions from City’s small donors to 2010 State Assembly candidates

How does it work?

The matching fund model usually contains the following characteristics:

- Participation is voluntary
- Small donations are matched with a multiplier such as 6:1
- The grants cover only a portion of the candidate's campaign costs; the candidate must raise private funds to cover the remainder of the costs.
- Expenditures are limited

How can I get involved?

<u>Things Your Group Can Do</u>	<u>Things You Can Do</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Organize a Letter to the Editor campaign✓ Start a petition drive✓ Meet with state legislators✓ Work with other groups and clubs to build a coalition on this issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Contact the governor and your state legislators and tell them you support campaign finance reform and Fair Elections✓ Write letters to the editor✓ Educate your friends and neighbors✓ Support the League’s efforts