

[ date/month ], 2009

The Honorable [ XXXX, Member of Congress ]  
Address  
City, St

Dear Representative] XXXX,

We are writing to encourage you to cosponsor H.R. 1826, the Fair Elections Now Act, introduced on March 31, 2009 by Reps. John Larson (D-Conn.) and Walter Jones (R-N.C.). In our view, this bipartisan legislation represents an historic opportunity to restore the public's faith in Congress.

We believe that the current campaign finance system requires that candidates for federal office spend too much time raising money and too little time listening to regular voters in their home state. Under the Fair Elections legislation, participating candidates for Congress would cap their donations at \$100 and would receive a set amount of Fair Elections funding should they meet the qualifying threshold of local support.

Under the program, additional funding would be available for qualified candidates on a four to one matching basis on small dollar contributions. The amount of funding for qualified candidates would be based on how much support he or she has in their communities, and would allow for competitive contests.

We have seen similar laws work well in Arizona, Connecticut, Maine, North Carolina, and elsewhere. In 2008, nearly 400 state candidates won their elections after participating in such programs. In Connecticut and Maine, more than 80 percent of the current legislatures were elected under similar programs, as were eight of the ten statewide elected officials in Arizona.

The voters support it as well. A bipartisan survey conducted by Lake Research and the Tarrance Group in February found that 67 percent of voters backed this reform. Support for it crossed all party and regional lines.

We are enclosing a "Dear Colleague" circulated by Reps. Larson and Jones and two other original cosponsors, Reps. Chellie Pingree (D-Me.) and Todd Platts (R-Pa.). We hope you will contact Rep. Larson's office at 202-225-2265 to let him know you will add your support to this bill. When you do so, please let us know.

In the meantime, we are prepared to answer any questions you or your staff may have about the legislation or why we believe it is important.

Sincerely,