

Fair Elections *Now* Coalition

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U.S. PIRG

April 16, 2009

Dear Representative,

On March 31, Representatives John Larson (D-Conn.) and Walter Jones, Jr. (R-N.C.) introduced the Fair Elections Now Act (H.R. 1826). Under this bill, candidates for Congress could run for office without relying on large contributions and big money bundlers, and would be freed from constant fundraising in order to focus on what people in their communities want. As the core coalition working to enact citizen-funded congressional elections, we send this letter with the enclosed materials to familiarize you with this legislation and to urge you to cosponsor H.R. 1826.

This is a much different proposal, in much different political circumstances, than past efforts to enact comprehensive campaign finance reform – and both demonstrate why this deserves your support.

As the accompanying material explains, the Fair Elections Now Act incorporates both the best practices from states with successful citizen-funded election systems as well as the lessons of the 2008 election to create a new, forward-looking program that amplifies the role of small donors with limited public funds. In this voluntary system, a candidate who raises enough money in small donations could receive funds totaling \$3.3 million – a level that fewer than 5% of Members of Congress reached in the 2008 election – and could continue to raise unmatched small donations to run a highly competitive race.

At its core, this legislation is premised on the simple idea that while you are in Washington, you should focus entirely on the people's business. Campaigning – including fundraising – can be left to when you're home and it is closer to election time.

Senators Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) and Arlen Specter (R-Pa.) joined Representatives Larson and Jones to introduce the bipartisan, bicameral Fair Elections Now Act on the same day in the House and the Senate, and are in agreement on the structure of the proposed Fair Elections system.

Enclosed you will find a variety of materials:

- Bipartisan polling memo
- Longer poll presentation
- Written summary of the bill
- Grid summary of the bill
- List of organizational supporters
- List of business leader supporters
- Newspaper editorial clips
- Recent article from National Journal
- Quotes from Republican and Democratic elected officials
- Snapshot of states with existing citizen-funded election systems
- Dear Colleague letter from Reps. Larson and Jones

To cosponsor H.R. 1826, please contact Jackie Sheltry (Larson) at jackie.sheltry@mail.house.gov or 5-2265, or Cybil Roehrenbeck (Jones) at cybil.roehrenbeck@mail.house.gov or 5-3415. *To learn more about H.R. 1826, please feel free to contact any of the individuals listed on the reverse side of this letter.*

We look forward to working with you further and we encourage you to cosponsor the Fair Elections Now Act. Thank you for your work as an esteemed public servant.

(over)

www.FairElectionsNow.org

To learn more about the Fair Elections Now Act (H.R. 1826), please feel free to contact:

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You may also visit <http://www.fairelectionsnow.org>.