

Resolution to support public campaign financing for the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives Fair Elections Now Act (S.752 / HR.1826)

WHEREAS, as the cost of federal campaigns and the political value of a seat in Congress has spiraled upward in recent years, our political system at all levels is increasingly dominated by the influence of large sums from special interests to finance electoral campaigns,

- large donors have special political access to lawmakers, providing undue influence over federal budgets, earmarks, regulations, lawmaking and public policy in general; and
- Main Street concerns of ordinary citizens are too often trumped by the influence and expectations of political favors from large campaign donors and their lobbyists, such that real concerns of Americans on Main Street are often not addressed; and
- the high cost of campaigns combined with large sums from private special interests has a corrupting influence on the democratic process, in that large campaign donors in effect choose who can run a competitive campaign, well before any voter deliberation; and
- the need to raise huge sums privately for campaigns ("dialing for dollars") is onerous and needlessly time-consuming, and can have a corrupting influence on candidates who have entered public service with good intentions to serve their constituents (rather than big donors) and to spend time with voters on issues, instead of dialing for dollars; and
- the electorate is becoming increasingly cynical and resentful over the loss of their voice and power; and

WHEREAS, Maine, Arizona, Connecticut and other states have demonstrated that public financing of campaigns (a.k.a. "Clean Elections" or "Voter-Owned Elections") works well, enjoying widespread use by candidates and enthusiastic support of voters; and

WHEREAS, campaign finance reform would save taxpayers millions of dollars now wasted when tax, budget, and public policy decisions are skewed toward political favors for large campaign contributors and lobbyists for special interests; and

WHEREAS, the **Fair Elections Now Act** as a bi-partisan proposal is now under consideration in the United States Senate (as S-752, by Sens. Dick Durbin, D-Ill, and Arlen Specter, R-Pa) and in the House of Representatives (as HR-1826, by Reps. John Larson, D-Ct, and Walter Jones, Jr., R-NC), offering public campaign financing, similar to Clean Elections programs in Maine and Arizona, for campaigns for the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that

hereby proclaims support for public financing of campaigns for the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, as reflected in the Fair Elections Now Act; and hereby urges support from all federal legislators from Washington State, and from state and local public officials in conversation with federal lawmakers, to support and enact public campaign financing at the federal level; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to all U.S. senators and members of Congress from Washington State; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to Washington Public Campaigns, an organization in Washington State which is organizing support for the Fair Elections Now Act in Congress, and which accepts mail at: P.O. Box 70452, Seattle, WA 98127-0452, and which has a website address for more information: www.washclean.org

Approved: _____ by _____
(date) *(Authorized officer for the organization)*

Fair Elections Now Act of 2009 (S.752 / HR.1826) applied in Washington State

U.S. SENATE

To qualify for public funds:

At least 6,500 contributions (*2,000, plus 500 times 9 Congressional Districts*)

Each no more than \$100, from in-state residents

Raise at least \$115,550 (*10% of funds awarded for primary race*)

Public funds awarded: \$3.5 million (*= \$1.25 million, plus \$250K times 9 Cong. Districts*)

Primary - \$1,155,500 (*= 33% of public funds awarded*)

And: qualifies for 20% reduction from lowest broadcast rates

General - \$2,345,000 (*= 67% of public funds awarded*)

And, 20% reduction from lowest broadcast rates

And, receives \$900,000 in media vouchers (*\$100K x 9 Congressional Districts*)

And, OK to exchange media vouchers for cash with national political party committee.

And, \$4 public match for each \$1 in contributions of \$100 or less (per year, in-state residents)

Maximum public funds (cap): \$10,500,000 (*= 3 times \$3,500,000 grant (primary + general)*)

But, can still accept contributions of \$100 (per year, per contributor) or less, unlimited.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

To qualify for public funds:

At least 1,500 contributions

Each no more than \$100, from in-state residents

Raise at least \$50,000

Public funds awarded:

Primary - \$360,000

And: qualifies for 20% reduction from lowest broadcast rates

General - \$540,000

And: qualifies for 20% reduction from lowest broadcast rates

And: receives \$100,000 in media vouchers

And: OK to exchange media vouchers for cash with national political party committee

And, \$4 public match for each \$1 in contributions of \$100 or less (per year, in-state residents)

Maximum public funds (cap): \$2,700,000 (*= 3 times \$900,000 grant (primary + general)*)

But, can still accept contributions of \$100 (per year, per contributor) or less, unlimited