

Citizen Lobbying for Judicial Public Financing bill

Organizing Guide and Tasks for Legislative District Team Leaders

Goal: Establish public financing for campaigns for Washington State Supreme Court

Background: In 2006, over \$4.3 million was raised and spent – over \$1.6 million in direct contributions to campaigns and nearly \$2.7 million in independent electioneering expenditures, mostly by special interests – seeking to influence elections results for three seats on the supreme court. It was an alarming increase in campaign spending for judicial seat elections.

(Detail: www.pdc.wa.gov/QuerySystem/candidates.aspx)

Justice must never be for sale! Judicial candidates should have the option to run using public financing for campaigns – so there is no hint of special interest influence on the court. Washington Public Campaigns has proposed a bill for consideration by the state legislature, to establish a program of optional public financing of campaigns for seats on the supreme court.

To achieve legislative support for the proposed judicial bill, **we must mobilize citizen lobbyists, to urge legislators to support the bill.** With enough citizen action, we demonstrate to legislators that a vote in favor is a "safe" vote that has constituent support.

Also, we must **publicize the judicial bill proposal** using every means, so that citizens know about it, know why it's needed (to maintain the integrity of the supreme court), and therefore will support public financing for judicial campaigns. **Info: www.washclean.org**

Here is an **ORGANIZING GUIDE AND TASKS FOR WPC LD TEAM LEADERS AND TEAMS**, to organize and mobilize citizen lobbyists at the legislative district level, to express support for a judicial bill.

1. **Become informed.** Visit WPC's website, washclean.org, for informational documents and fliers. Visit the PDC website (listed above) for info on previous judicial seat campaign spending.
2. **Recruit a team of WPC volunteer helpers** – from suggestions by WPC staff / leaders.
3. **Obtain names and contact information for any other citizen lobbying groups** in your LD that are helping to pass a judicial bill. These might include: local unit of League of Women Voters; WashPIRG local volunteers; Futurewise members, and other environmental groups; local church/faith groups; local union leaders/workers. WPC will have information and suggestions.
4. **Meet with your team and other allies**, to get organized. Talk with WPC to clarify the tasks and goals. Arrange a meeting of volunteers from the district. Discuss the tasks, the resources available, and decide how best to lobby your legislators and to generate community awareness of the bill.
5. **Arrange a meeting with your three legislators** (senator, and two representatives). WPC can help with contact information and suggestions. At the meeting, emphasize there is citizen support to maintain the integrity of the court and for a bill to create public financing for judicial campaigns. Ask for your legislator's support and vote. Refer any concerns or questions they have to WPC.
6. **Organize phone calling to other WPC supporters** – and to members of other groups working with WPC to pass a bill – using lists from WPC. **Ask them to contact their legislators** expressing support for a judicial bill. Provide them with info how to contact legislators (from WPC website). Invite them to visit the WPC website, for background information about the bill and advocacy efforts.
7. **Arrange presentations to community groups** about the judicial bill and advocacy campaign.
8. **Remain ready for further citizen lobbying**, based on WPC reports and Action Alerts, as the bill progresses through the legislative process. For example, for those who can come to Olympia, arrange attendance at legislative hearings. Keep up the citizen lobbying pressure!