

WISCONSIN STATE  
LEGISLATURE  
COMMITTEE HEARING  
RECORDS

2005-06

(session year)

Assembly

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on  
Campaigns &  
Elections  
(AC-CE)

File Naming Example:

Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

- > 05hr\_AC-Ed\_RCP\_pt01a
- > 05hr\_AC-Ed\_RCP\_pt01b
- > 05hr\_AC-Ed\_RCP\_pt02

*Published Documents*

> Committee Hearings ... CH (Public Hearing Announcements)

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> Committee Reports ... CR

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> Executive Sessions ... ES

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> Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

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*Information Collected For Or  
Against Proposal*

> Appointments ... Appt

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> Clearinghouse Rules ... CRule

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> Hearing Records ... HR (bills and resolutions)

> **05hr\_ab0289\_AC-CE\_pt01**

> Miscellaneous ... Misc

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**ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS  
HEARING ON AB 289, AJR22 & AJR 41**

May 26, 2005

I am Herman Holtzman, and I represent myself.

Regarding AB 289, I support the part of banning contributions but would like to expand the ban to all the time the legislators are in office. Allowing contributions before and after legislative sessions could result in either bribes or pay-offs.

Legislators are involved in creating legislation, co-sponsoring bills, conducting hearings, studying bills, and offering amendments before and after legislative floor sessions. Contributions during this period could certainly affect legislation and should be banned.

Regarding AJR 22 and AJR 41, I support the concept but I think implementation is most difficult if not impossible. It means that any idea of fairness in elections is a minimum of six years away. Redistricting with regard to only population should not be a problem. I would volunteer to do it with my slide rule that I got in 1946 from the VA while enrolled in Civil Engineering at the University of Wisconsin under the GI Bill. Political competitiveness and racial diversity would be hard to achieve.

Even if these resolutions became law and there was an agreement on redistricting, elections would still not be fair. I think that as long as candidates have to depend on money to get elected, they cannot be independent. They have to vote the party line, even if it is not for the benefit of the people. If they don't, they could face a financially strong challenger in the next primary and general election.

Of the six members on this committee, three faced no challenger in the primary and general election, two faced no primary opposition but did have a challenger in the general election. One had a contested primary for an open seat and only token opposition in the general election.

In the 2004 Assembly election, 66 incumbents did not face a primary challenge, only 19 incumbents faced a primary challenge and 14 districts had challengers for the open seats.

It is obvious the current system is not working and will not work after redistricting unless there are competitive races in all districts. This can only be achieved by providing full public funding now that will include one third of the funds for primary elections.

A comprehensive finance campaign reform Bill calling for full public funding will be introduced in the near future. I hope you and your colleagues will support this Bill. Attached is an information sheet providing reasons for supporting full public funding of elections

# THE CASE FOR FULL PUBLIC FINANCING

## UNION HEADLINE

**“VOTERS MAY HAVE TRIED TO INFLUENCE THE LAST ELECTION”**

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**SENATOR BOB DOLE SAID,**

**“People who give money to campaigns expect more than good government”.**

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**STATE SENATOR MICHAEL ELLIS SAID,**

**“Public policy should be determined on merits”.**

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**JOHN NICHOLS SAID,**

**“Consider how powerful the media and communication lobbies are in Washington, D.C., as they routinely use the campaign contribution scalpel to remove politicians' backbones”.**

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**Election campaigns should be independent of special interests, fair for the candidates, educational for the public, and simple to administrate.**

### **REASONS FOR “CLEAN MONEY”**

- Eliminates corruption and the appearance of corruption
- Saves taxpayers many times the cost of public funding when the influence of money is eliminated from policymaking
- Provides financial help to encourage good candidates to participate in the primary election
- Eliminates dependence on special interests
- Eliminates fund raising and the spending arms race
- Eliminates the need for spending money to raise money
- Eliminates the time and energy spent by the candidate and staff for fundraisers
- Reduces the short radio and TV ads which are conducive to negative and distorting images
- Provides more time for candidate to study the issues, participate in debates and forums and respond to questionnaires
- Provides more free speech
- Encourages the public to attend political meetings knowing they won't be asked to contribute to candidates
- Encourages the public to learn about the issues since they won't be bombarded with misleading TV ads
- Eliminates accounting for contributions and submitting reports
- Eliminates auditing of contribution reports by Elections Board
- Eliminates confusion over who, where or when contributions may be made
- Eliminates accumulation of war chests
- Reduces public cynicism and engages people in the election process
- Restores the public's faith in the election process
- Restores Wisconsin's reputation for clean government
- Revitalizes Democracy

### **REASONS AGAINST**

- Taxpayers should not finance elections of candidates they don't support
- Legislators don't want reform that may jeopardize their election
- Certain reformers are willing to accept partial corruption

**IF THE ABOVE WAS A SCALE OF JUSTICE, WHICH REASONS WEIGH MORE?**