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Details:

(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

## WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

### 2007-08

(session year)

### Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

### Committee on ... Campaign Finance Reform, Rural Issues, and Information Technology (SC-CFRRIT)

#### COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

#### INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
  - (**ab** = Assembly Bill)                      (**ar** = Assembly Resolution)                      (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
  - (**sb** = Senate Bill)                              (**sr** = Senate Resolution)                              (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

## Senate

### Record of Committee Proceedings

#### **Committee on Campaign Finance Reform, Rural Issues and Information Technology**

##### **Senate Bill 182**

Relating to: the scope of regulated activity under the campaign finance law, public financing of elections for certain state offices, providing an exemption from emergency rule procedures, granting rule-making authority, providing a penalty, and making appropriations.

By Senators Risser, Hansen, Lassa, Lehman, Miller, Sullivan and Wirch; cosponsored by Representatives Pocan, Berceau, Black, Boyle, Garthwaite, Hebl, Hintz, Parisi, Pope-Roberts, Seidel, Sinicki, Smith, Travis, Turner and Zepnick.

May 14, 2007                      Referred to Committee on Campaign Finance Reform, Rural Issues and Information Technology.

January 29, 2008                **PUBLIC HEARING HELD**

Present:    (5)        Senators Kreitlow, Erpenbach, Lassa, Kanavas and Kapanke.

Absent:     (0)        None.

##### Appearances For

- Fred Risser, Madison — Senator
- Mark Pocan — Representative, Wisconsin State Representative, District 78
- Beverly Speer, Madison — Wisconsin Democracy Campaign
- Cordelia Mayberry, Madison — Church Women United
- Rob Steinhof, Blanchardville
- Gilman Ross, Oregon

##### Appearances Against

- None.

##### Appearances for Information Only

- None.

##### Registrations For

- Laura Gottlieb, Madison
- Gail Sumi, Madison — AARP Wisconsin
- Nick Nyhart — President/CEO, Public Campaign
- Leigh Roberts, Madison — Wisconsin Retired Educators Assn

- Rob Wilkinson, Janesville
- Mary Bean, Madison
- Marion Stuenkel, Madison — 1606 Foxpoint Ave
- Charles Cornwell, Madison
- Kaj Foget, Madison

Registrations Against

- None.

Registrations for Information Only

- None.

February 28, 2008

**EXECUTIVE SESSION HELD**

Present: (4) Senators Kreitlow, Erpenbach, Lassa and Kapanke.

Absent: (1) Senator Kanavas.

Moved by Senator Lassa, seconded by Senator Kreitlow that **Senate Bill 182** be recommended for passage.

Ayes: (3) Senators Kreitlow, Erpenbach and Lassa.

Noes: (1) Senator Kapanke.

Absent: (1) Senator Kanavas.

PASSAGE RECOMMENDED, Ayes 3, Noes 1

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Kathy Daggs  
Committee Clerk

Vote Record

Committee on Campaign Finance Reform, Rural  
Issues and Information Technology

Date: 02/28/08

Bill Number: SB-182

Moved by: Lassa

Seconded by: Kreitlow

Motion: Passage

Committee Member

Senator Pat Kreitlow, Chair

Senator Jon Erpenbach

Senator Julie Lassa

Senator Ted Kanavas

Senator Dan Kapanke

Aye

No

Absent

Not Voting

Totals:

3

1

    

    

Motion Carried

Motion Failed

Date: January 29th, 2008

**Dear Chairman Kreitlow;**

I have traveled from Blanchardville today to call on you and the Committee to approve Senate Bill 182 for full discussion and vote by the Legislature.

There is no single <sup>Full</sup> action you can take that is more *fair and just* than to give back State elections to all citizens through <sup>100%</sup> public funding. Public financing of our elections can save us from the dark veil of real and perceived corruption that is the infection of private and corporate cash blowing campaign costs out of grasp of any common citizen called to serve in office. This act of public campaign financing is my last real hope to restore common sense and common good in our state and nation.

Please help - pass SB 182.

With best regards,



Rob Steinhof  
135 S. Main St.  
P.O. Box 114  
Blanchardville, WI 53516  
414-899-1763



CLEAN  
MONEY  
CLEAN  
ELECTIONS

**TESTIMONY OF NICK NYHART**

**President and CEO, Public Campaign**

**Submitted to the Wisconsin  
Committee on Campaign Finance Reform, Rural Issues  
and Information Technology**

**January 29, 2008**

My name is Nick Nyhart. I am the president and CEO of Public Campaign, a national organization based in Washington, DC that addresses the problems of money in American politics. During my decade at Public Campaign, I have worked to pass Clean Elections, or full public financing laws, at the state and national level. Full public financing programs are now in place in seven states and two cities nationwide.

I am submitting this testimony in favor of Senate Bill 182, legislation that would bring full public financing of elections to state races in Wisconsin. This legislation is modeled on successful full public financing laws nationwide. In Arizona, Connecticut, and Maine full public financing is available for all state elections; in North Carolina, for judicial elections; in New Mexico, for the Public Regulation Commission; in Vermont, for governor and lieutenant-governor races; and in New Jersey, for a 2007 legislative pilot program. Public financing is also on the books in Albuquerque, New Mexico and made its debut last year in Portland, Oregon. In the states where Clean Elections has been implemented, it is performing well. More than 200 officials are in office that used Clean Elections to run their races in Arizona, Connecticut, Maine, New Jersey, and North Carolina. In 2006, Democratic Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano won her second race as a publicly funded candidate.

In the past 10 years in Wisconsin, total campaign spending by candidates for the legislature has nearly doubled, from \$4.8 million in 1994 to \$9 million in 2006. Candidates vying for Senate seats in competitive districts have seen a spending increase of nearly 150 percent, according to the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign.

If Senate Bill 182 becomes law, candidates would no longer need to raise thousands of dollars in private contributions. Instead, after demonstrating broad public support by raising a set number of small contributions, candidates would receive sufficient money to run a competitive race.

money, debates and stump speeches are filled with rhetoric on the influence of campaign contributions. At the height of the Democratic primary, all eight candidates announced their support for full public financing of elections. And Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) has been a vocal proponent of the system in Arizona as well as in other states.

By adopting full public financing for elections, the legislature will be demonstrating to all Wisconsin residents that their votes and small contributions matter as much as those who can afford to give much more. We are living in a time when voters have identified corruption in government as one of their top tier concerns at the polling booth. One need only look at the exit polls for the 2006 election. Forty-two percent of voters said corruption and ethics in government, more than any other issue, was extremely important to them. Wisconsin deserves a political system where success is not based on how much money candidates can amass, but rather their ideas and their ties to the community.

The momentum is growing. We can create a new system based on the widely shared American values of fair competition, equal opportunity, and inclusive participation. It is an idea whose time has come.

I urge your support of comprehensive public financing legislation this year.

# FRED A. RISSER

Wisconsin State Senator



## *Testimony on Senate Bill 182, the Clean Elections Bill, 1/29/08*

There is no question that Wisconsin's campaign finance system is broken. The current structure forces candidates to concentrate almost exclusively on raising money rather than connecting with voters, debating issues, and forming substantive public policy positions. This type of campaign environment places power in the hands of a few special interest groups and disenfranchises the average voter.

Senate Bill 182, the Clean Elections bill, seeks to overhaul the current system in order to ensure that big ideas, rather than big money will determine election outcomes. The new system of public financing will open-up the campaign field to candidates who would otherwise have insufficient financial resources to run a competitive campaign.

The bill would create a 100% public financing system for candidates running for state races. To qualify to receive public grants, "Clean" candidates would be required to collect a set number of \$5 contributions from the district in which they are running. The candidate would then receive a grant ranging from \$50,000 to \$2 million, depending on the office sought.

In addition, Clean candidates running against traditionally funded candidates may receive matching funds to ensure a fair campaign. As a traditional candidate's spending increases past the amount of the grant, the Clean candidate will receive dollar for dollar matching funds of up to 2.5 times the original grant. A Clean candidate may also receive matching funds for independent expenditures made in opposition to them or in support of their opponent.

Publicly financed campaigns in Wisconsin couldn't come soon enough. The 2008 state legislative races already appear poised to break previous spending records and the current State Supreme Court contest is already awash with special interest money.

The Clean Elections bill is an excellent step forward to restore the voters' faith in our democratic system. It's time that Wisconsin passed comprehensive campaign finance reform for the public good.