

WISCONSIN STATE
LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE HEARING
RECORDS

2001-02

(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)

> **

> Committee Reports ... CR

> **

> Executive Sessions ... ES

> **

> Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

> **

*Information Collected For Or
Against Proposal*

> Appointments ... Appt

> **

> Clearinghouse Rules ... CRule

**

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

> **01hr_ajr0006_AC-CE_pt01**

> Miscellaneous ... Misc

> **

Testimony of Representative Tim Carpenter
AJR 6 – Relating to: reasonable limits on state or local campaign expenditures
Assembly Committee on Campaign and Elections
Thursday, March 15, 2001

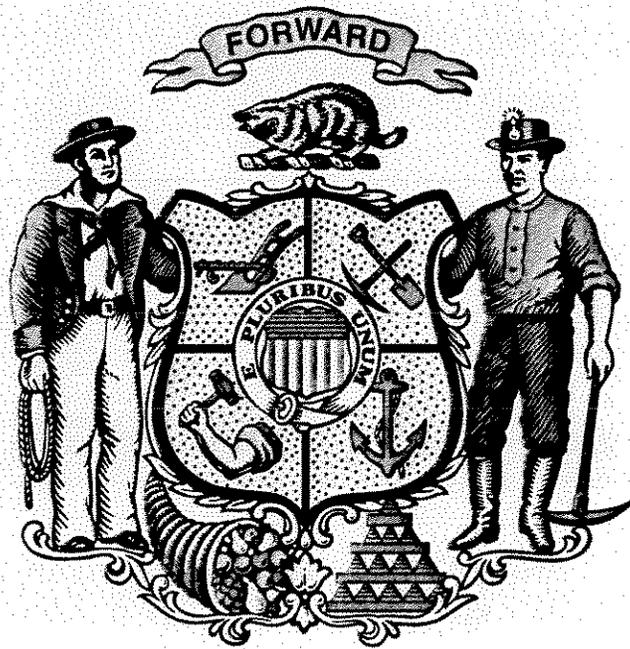
Thank you Mr. Chairman and committee members for having a public hearing on AJR 6 – relating to reasonable limits on state or local campaign expenditures. I appreciate your ongoing interest in campaign finance reform issues.

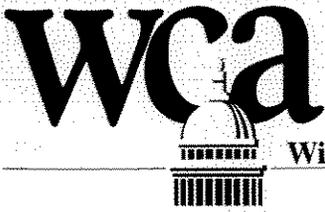
AJR 6 is a constitutional amendment up for first consideration. It is intended to challenge the 1976 Buckley v. Valeo Supreme Court decision, which today continues to have a tremendous impact on our ability to run campaigns and elections cleanly as well as our ability to regulate them. Accordingly, many people now argue that the decision rendered by the court in 1976 was done so in a vastly different environment than exists at present.

Today as campaign expenditures have skyrocketed to obscene levels, multimillion-dollar campaigns have become all too commonplace here in Wisconsin. And the effect has been to freeze-out many ordinary citizens from ever considering a run at public office or unfairly handicapping those citizens who do try but who are not connected to the big-monied special interests seeking to usurp our governmental institutions. The end result, free speech and civic participation are under threat from uncontrolled and unlimited campaign spending.

Last fall 56 counties held referendums on this very issue of enacting reasonable campaign spending limits. Overall, just over 90% of the voters in counties representing 86% of the population of the state approved the referendum. Brown County will offer the referendum in the Spring of 2001. Passing a constitutional amendment allowing reasonable campaign spending limits would place Wisconsin on better legal footing in challenging the Buckley v. Valeo decision since constitutional language carries more weight overall than statutory law.

Now is the time to give serious consideration to adopting AJR 6, and to allow Wisconsin citizens the opportunity to vote on a constitutional amendment, which reasonably limits campaign expenditures. In so doing, we have an opportunity to preserve our government of the people, for the people and by the people, rather than a government subjugated by special interests.





Wisconsin Counties Association

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections
FROM: Jennifer Sunstrom, Legislative Associate JS
DATE: March 15, 2001
RE: AJR 6

The Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) would like to thank you for the opportunity to present brief comments in support of Assembly Joint Resolution 6 which seeks a constitutional amendment to allow the legislature to impose "reasonable" limits on campaign expenditures for state or local elective offices in Wisconsin.

In an effort to enact meaningful campaign finance reform, WCA lends its support to proposals which address the issues outlined in the November referendum question which stated: "Do you support legislation to reform the state campaign finance system that would limit campaign spending, require stricter contribution limits and require full and prompt disclosure of election-related activities?"

However, we respectfully request that any limits placed on local elective offices are equitable to the limits placed on state elected offices.

Thank you for considering our comments.