

AB 155 2



**BRIAN BURKE**  
WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

Senate Chair, Joint Committee on Finance

**Testimony of Sen. Brian Burke**  
**Voters First Reform -- SB62/AB155**  
**Senate Judiciary, Consumer Affairs and Campaign Finance Reform Committee**  
**April 5, 2001**

I want to express my thanks to Senator George and the entire committee for this prompt hearing on the Voters First proposal. I truly appreciate this opportunity for the public's voice to be heard on the critical issue of campaign finance reform. Obviously, overcoming inertia on this issue won't be easy. But unless we allow the public to be heard, and unless we really listen, the task will be impossible.

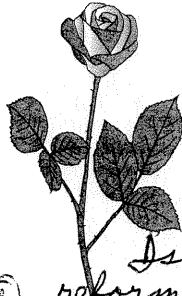
I am proud to be a co-author of this proposal. The legislators who have joined in this effort represent both houses and both parties. A number of us have offered sweeping campaign finance reform proposals in the past. This builds on the best ideas from each plan. For this reason, it has the best chance of success. We now have a unique opportunity. One need only reflect on events this week in Washington to understand the promise of this moment in history. Now is the time for Wisconsin to reassert its place as a leader in reform.

For reform to become reality, it has to be bipartisan in spirit and substance. Voters First meets this standard. It establishes limits on campaign spending, tightens limits on contributions and requires full and prompt disclosure of all activities intended to influence the outcome of our elections.

Voters First draws not only on a cross section of this body's best thinking on the subject, but some of these elements are already working in states like Minnesota. Provisions like a higher check-off that allows citizens to target their funds to the party of their choice, and a \$50 tax credit for eligible contributions, work in Minnesota because they encourage more citizens to get involved.

Voters First has the support of more than 40 statewide organizations, ranging from the American Association of University Women to the Wisconsin Counties Association. It does exactly what the vast majority of Wisconsin voters demanded in the November referendum. The challenge before us is nothing less than restoring confidence in our electoral system and encouraging full and free participation. Voters First is an important first step. It is time we take this step together. Thank you.

Ms. Elaine J. Lubbers  
1214 Cherry St.  
Green Bay WI 54301-4332



Re SB 67/AB155

- Is the first & only comprehensive
- ① reform proposal sponsored by legislators from both parties.
  - ② It does exactly what 90% of Wis voters said they want done in last Nov. referendum on campaign finance reform.
  - ③ It tightens limits on contributions & requires full disclosure of all election activities.
  - ④ It has the support of over 40 statewide groups, 4 of which I am a member -

Common Cause

AART

Wis Democracy Campaign

League of Women Voters

PLEASE PASS WITHOUT  
AMENDMENTS

Elaine J. Lubbers

John Ryba Senate } are my legislators  
Judy Krawczuk }