

EFFORTS AT PUBLIC FUNDING OF ELECTIONS IN THE U.S. CONGRESS

This article provides an inventory of attempted legislative actions to address public financing of elections as a legislative solution to the effects of Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission. It also provides information about cases in which the League of Women Voters has lobbied on the bills. In the description of each bill, the role of Washington State Congressional delegation members has been highlighted.

Excerpt from the Federal Election Commission website:

The Federal Election Commission administered the first public funding program in 1976. Eligible Presidential candidates used federal funds in their primary and general election campaigns, and the major parties used public funds to pay for their nominating conventions. Legislation for public financing of Presidential candidates was first proposed, however, in 1907. In his State of the Union message that year, President Theodore Roosevelt recommended public financing of federal elections and a ban on private contributions.¹

In 1966, Congress enacted the first public funding legislation, but suspended it a year later. That law would have made U.S. Treasury funds available to eligible nominees in the Presidential general election through payments to their political parties. Funds would have come from a Presidential Election Campaign Fund in the U.S. Treasury consisting of dollars voluntarily checked off by taxpayers on their federal income tax returns. A subsidy formula would have determined the amount of public funds available to eligible candidates.

In 1971, Congress adopted similar provisions, which formed the basis of the public funding system in effect today. Under the 1971 Revenue Act the nominee, rather than the party, receives the public funds accumulated through the dollar check-off.² The Revenue Act also placed limits on campaign spending by Presidential nominees who receive public money and a ban on all private contributions to them.

In a parallel development, Congress passed the 1971 Federal Election Campaign Act which required full, detailed reporting of campaign contributions and expenditures by all federal candidates, including Presidential candidates.³ The 1974 Amendments to the Federal Election Campaign Act completed the system we now have for public financing of Presidential elections.⁴ Those Amendments extended the public funding provisions of the Revenue Act to Presidential primary elections and the Presidential nominating conventions of national parties.⁵ Court challenges to the expenditure limits followed soon after Congress passed the 1974 Amendments. However, the Supreme Court, in two separate suits, first implied and later affirmed that expenditure limits for publicly funded Presidential candidates are constitutional.⁶ In 1976,

¹ "Public Funding of Presidential Elections", *Federal Election Commission*, <http://www.fec.gov/pages/brochures/pubfund.shtml>, viewed 12/14/15

² Presidential Election Campaign Fund Act, 26 U.S.C. §9001 et seq. (Public Law 92-178)

³ Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971, 2 U.S.C. §431 et seq. (Public Law 92-225)

⁴ Federal Election Campaign Act Amendments of 1974 : Public Law 93-443 : 88 Stat. 1263 : October 15, 1974.

⁵ Presidential Primary Matching Payment Account Act, 2 U.S.C. §9031 et seq.

⁶ *Buckley v. Valeo*, 424 U.S. 1 (1976)

Congress made minor changes to the public funding provisions and in 1979 and 1984 increased the public funding entitlement and spending limit for national nominating conventions.^{7,8,9}

The League of Women Voters Supports Public Financing of Elections

The League of Women Voters (LWVUS) has supported public financing of elections since the 1970s.

Here in an excerpt from the League's "Campaign Finance: The League's History"

The League's campaign finance reform strategy has two tracks: 1) achieve incremental reforms where possible in the short term, and 2) build support for public financing as the best long-term solution.

Current federal law allows public funding of presidential elections; however, public funding of congressional elections, which the LWVUS supports, is an elusive goal and is not allowed under current law.

When the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1974 (FECA) was challenged in court, the League, together with other organizations, intervened as defendants. In 1976, the Supreme Court upheld portions of the law providing for disclosure, public financing and contribution limits, but it overturned limits on candidates' spending, if they used private financing, and limits on independent expenditures.

In 1989-1992, the League fought for comprehensive campaign finance reform to address the abuses in the existing system, supporting bills that curbed special-interest contributions and provided public financing for candidates who accepted voluntary spending limits. In 1991-1992, the League defended the system of public financing for presidential candidates through check-offs on income tax forms.

Both houses passed strong reform measures in 1992, and the bill that emerged from the conference committee promised the most far-reaching campaign finance reform since Watergate. The President vetoed the bill, and an attempt to override was unsuccessful. In 1995 and 1996, the League continued its support for comprehensive reform through lobbying, testimony, grassroots action, and work with the media.

As the League continued to focus on reducing the corrupting influence of big money in elections, League work at the state level contributed to real progress. Public financing, the "Clean Money Option," was adopted in several states, including Arizona and Maine; other state reform efforts have made progress in Massachusetts and Vermont. Reform measures were on the 2000 ballot in Missouri and Oregon, but fell short.

In the second session of the 108th Congress, the League continued its work on improving the presidential public financing system. The LWVUS sought cosponsors to legislation introduced by Senators McCain and Feingold and Representatives Shays and Meehan to fix the system. The

⁷ 90 STAT. 250. PUBLIC LAW 94-238—MAR. 23, 1976

⁸ 93 Stat. 1339 Public Law 96-187 Jan. 10, 1980

⁹ 98 STAT. 394 PUBLIC LAW 98-355—JULY 11, 1984

LWVUS also joined a coalition project that sought pledge commitments from the 2004 presidential candidates to support the public financing system's reform if elected. In 2003 and 2004, the League again urged taxpayers to check the box to support the Presidential Election Fund.

In 2005 and 2006, the League continued to promote campaign finance reform as well as public funding for presidential elections. In December 2005, the League president spoke at a Capitol Hill conference titled "The Issue of Presidential Public Financing: Its Goals, History, Current Status and Problems." In 2006, the LWVUS joined with other organizations in a letter to U.S. Representatives urging them to co-sponsor and support the Meehan-Shays bill that would make a series of important reforms to the presidential public financing system. During the 2008 presidential campaign, the League pressed all the candidates to support reform of the presidential public financing system.

In 2007 and 2008, the League endorsed legislation to fix the public financing system for president and to establish congressional public financing for the first time. The League also supported banning leadership PACs and continued to press the courts to properly interpret and enforce campaign finance law. The League continues to push for legislation to protect and reinvigorate the public financing system for president. In addition, the League continues to work to reinvigorate the dysfunctional Federal Election Commission (FEC) which has refused to enforce the law.¹⁰

League of Women Voters Joined Partners in Supporting Public Funding of Presidential Campaigns

HR 2356 – Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002¹¹

The LWVUS joined the Campaign Legal Center, Common Cause, Democracy 21, Public Citizen and U.S. PIRG in writing a letter to all members of Congress urging them to support the new legislation that was introduced in 2006 by Senator Russ Feingold (D-WI) and Representatives Marty Meehan (D-MA) and Christopher Shays (R-CT) to fix the presidential public financing system.

Democracy 21 stated:

"The presidential public financing system was created in 1974 in the wake of the Watergate scandals and served the nation well for most of its existence. The system, however, is now broken and in need of repair. At a time when corruption scandals continue to unfold in Washington and deeply concern the American people, it makes no sense to abandon a presidential financing system that has played a major role in protecting the integrity of the presidency and that can be repaired to play the same critical role in the future."¹²

¹⁰ "Campaign Finance: The League's History", *League of Women Voters*, <http://lwv.org/content/campaign-finance>, viewed 05/09/16

¹¹ HR 2356 – Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/107th-congress/house-bill/2356>, viewed 05/09/16

¹² "New Legislation Introduced Today by Feingold, Meehan and Shays to Fix the Presidential Financing System", *Democracy 21*, <http://www.democracy21.org/archives/issues/presidential-public-financing/new-legislation-introduced-today-by-feingold-meehan-and-shays-to-fix-the-presidential-public-financing-system-2/>, viewed 05/09/16

LWVUS amicus brief in *Lair v. Motl*, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth District¹³

The LWVUS filed an amicus brief in *Lair v. Motl*, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth District. The brief notes studies about campaign contributions and the impact on judicial impartiality on a state level. Excerpts from the amicus brief:

*Contributions to judicial campaigns have an actual and perceived impact on judicial impartiality. In a recent survey conducted by Amicus Justice at Stake, almost 50% of responding judges reported that they think campaign contributions have at least a little influence on judicial decisions.*¹⁴

*This perception is born out in data tracking the relationship between contributor identity and judicial decisions. Another recent study found a correlation between the size of business contributions that supreme court justices receive and the frequency of pro-business decisions from those justices.*¹⁵

*Judges believe that this correlation between contributions and outcomes favorable to contributors motivates judicial campaign spending. One sitting justice, Paul E. Pfeifer, told the New York Times that he “never felt so much like a hooker down by the bus station in any race LWVUS I’ve ever been in as I did in a judicial race. Everyone interested in contributing has very specific interests. . . . They mean to be buying a vote.”*¹⁶

League Joins Amicus Brief in *Williams-Yulee v. The Florida Bar*¹⁷

LWVUS and the League of Women Voters of Florida joined an amicus brief in the case of *Williams-Yulee v. The Florida Bar* before the U.S. Supreme Court on January 20, 2015. The case focuses on the constitutionality of prohibitions on direct solicitation by candidates for judicial office. The brief argues that the public must have confidence in the independence and impartiality of judges. Many state Leagues throughout the country work on the issue of judicial elections.

¹³ LWVUS Amicus Curiae in *Lair v. Motl*,

<http://lwv.org/files/cfr%20Lair%20v%20%20Motl%20CLC%20et%20al%20%20amicus%20brief%207%201%2014%20FILE%20S%20TAMPED%20%283%29.pdf>, viewed 05/09/16

¹⁴ “Justice at Stake – State Judges Frequency Questionnaire”, Greenberg, Quinlan, Rosner Research, Inc., *Justice at Stake Campaign*, http://www.justiceatstake.org/media/cms/JASJudgesSurveyResults_EA8838C0504A5.pdf

¹⁵ Shepherd, Joanna, “Justice at Risk: An Empirical Analysis of Campaign Contributions and Judicial Decision”, *American Constitution Society for Law and Policy*, <http://www.acslaw.org/ACS%20Justice%20at%20Risk%20%28FINAL%29%206%2010%2013.pdf>, viewed 05/09/16

¹⁶ Liptak, Adam and Roberts, Janet, “Campaign Cash Mirrors a High Court’s Ruling”, *The New York Times*, October 1, 2006, http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/01/us/01judges.html?_r=0, viewed 05/09/16

¹⁷ *Williams-Yulee v The Florida Bar*, https://apps.oyez.org/docreader/#/written_opinion/566, viewed 05/09/16

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS

2015

League Opposes H.R. 412 and H.R. 195, March 3, 2015: The League sent a letter to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on House Administration urging Representatives to vote no on H.R. 412¹⁸ (introduced January 20, 2015 and also now in House Ways and Means Committee, whose members include WA Reps. Reichert and McDermott) and H.R. 195¹⁹ (introduced January 7, 2015 and now in House Committee on House Administration).²⁰ These bills would repeal the presidential public financing system and terminate the Election Assistance Commission (EAC).

H.R. 20²¹ sponsored by Rep. Sarbanes, co-sponsored by WA Reps. DelBene, Kilmer, McDermott, Smith, Heck and Larsen, introduced January 21, 2015, to reform the financing of Congressional elections by broadening participation by small dollar donors, and for other purposes. This bill is currently in House Committee on Ways and Means (WA Reps. Reichert and McGovern on the committee), the House Energy and Commerce subcommittee on Communications and Technology and the House Committee on House Administration.

H.R. 424²², sponsored by Rep. David Price, introduced January 21, 2015, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the system of public financing for Presidential elections, to establish a system of public financing for Congressional elections, to promote the disclosure of disbursements made in coordination with campaigns for election for Federal office, and for other purposes. This bill is now in the House Committee on House Administration and the House Ways and Means Committee whose members include WA Reps. Reichert and McDermott

H.R. 2143²³: A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the system of public financing for Presidential elections, and for other purposes, EMPOWER Act, Apr 30, 2015, sponsored by Representative Price. Currently in the House House Administration Committee. This bill is alive and may be considered at any time during the 114th Congress (through 2016).

S. 1176²⁴: A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the system of public financing for Presidential elections, and for other purposes, EMPOWER Act of 2015, sponsored by Senator Udall, was introduced April 30, 2015. Currently in the Senate Rules and Administration Committee. This bill is alive and may be considered at any time during the 114th Congress (through 2016).

¹⁸ H.R. 412 – To reduce Federal Spending and the deficit by terminating taxpayer financing of presidential election campaigns, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/412>, viewed 12/14/15

¹⁹ H.R. 195 – Election Assistance Commission Termination Act, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/195>, viewed 12/14/15

²⁰ “League Opposes H.R. 412 and H.R. 195”, *League of Women Voters*, <http://lwv.org/content/league-opposes-hr-412-and-hr-195>, viewed 12/14/15

²¹ H.R. 20 – Government by the People Act of 2014, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/20>, viewed 12/14/15

²² H.R. 424 – Empowering Citizens Act, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/424>, viewed 12/14/15

²³ H.R. 2143: EMPOWER Act, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/hr2143>, viewed 05/11/16

²⁴ S. 1176: EMPOWER Act, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/s1176>, viewed 05/11/16

S.1538²⁵: A bill to reform the financing of Senate elections, and for other purposes, Fair Elections Now Act, sponsored by Sen. Durbin, introduced June 10, 2015. Currently in Senate Finance Committee; WA Senator Cantwell on committee. This bill is alive and may be considered at any time during the 114th Congress (through 2016).

2014

H.R. 20²⁶, sponsored by Rep. Sarbanes, co-sponsored by WA Reps. DelBene, Kilmer, McDermott, Smith, Heck and Larsen, introduced February 5, 2014, to reform the financing of Congressional elections by broadening participation by small dollar donors, and for other purposes. Died in House Committee on Ways and Means; WA Reps. Reichert and McGovern on the committee.

S. 2023²⁷, Fair Elections Now Act, sponsored by Sen. Durbin, introduced Feb. 12, 2014. A bill to reform the financing of Senate elections, and for other purposes. Died in Senate Committee on Finance; WA Sen. Cantwell on committee.

2013

H.R. 268²⁸, sponsored by Rep. Sarbanes, introduced Jan 15, 2013. To reform the financing of Congressional elections by encouraging grassroots participation in the funding of campaigns, and for other purposes. Died in House Committee on Ways and Means; WA Reps. Reichert and McGovern on the committee.

H.R. 269²⁹, Fair Elections Now Act, sponsored by Rep. Yarmuth, cosponsored by WA Reps. McDermott, Smith and Kilmer, introduced January 15, 2013, to reform the financing of House elections, and for other purposes. The bill would allow federal candidates to choose to run for office without relying on large contributions, big money bundlers, or donations from lobbyists, and would be freed from the constant fundraising in order to focus on what people in their communities want. Died in the House Administration Committee.

H.R. 260³⁰, Sponsored by Rep. Gregg Harper, introduced January 15, 2013, to reduce Federal spending and the deficit by terminating taxpayer financing of presidential election campaigns and party conventions and by terminating the Election Assistance Commission. Died in House Ways and Means Committee; WA Reps. Reichert and McGovern on the committee.

²⁵ S. 1538 – Fair Elections Now Act, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/1538>, viewed 05/11/16

²⁶H.R. 20 – Government by the People Act of 2014, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/20>, viewed 12/14/15

²⁷ S. 2023 – Fair Elections Now Act, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/senate-bill/2023>, viewed 04/26/16

²⁸ H.R. 268 – Grassroots Democracy Act of 2013, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/hr268/text>, viewed 04/26/16

²⁹ H.R. 269 – Fair Elections Now Act, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/269>, viewed 12/14/15

³⁰ H.R. 260, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/260>, viewed 12/14/15

H.R. 2019³¹, Sponsored by Gregg Harper, introduced May 16, 2013, co-sponsored by WA Reps. Herrera Beutler, McMorris Rodgers, Hastings and Reichert, to eliminate taxpayer financing of political party conventions and reprogram savings to provide for a 10-year pediatric research initiative through the Common Fund administered by the National Institutes of Health, and for other purposes. WA Reps. McMorris Rodgers, Herrera Beutler, and McDermott did not vote; Rick Larsen voted nay; WA Reps. DelBene, Heck, Kilmer, Smith, Reichert and Hastings voted aye. Passed the Senate by unanimous consent (no recorded individual votes), signed into law by President Obama.

League Urges U.S. House to Vote No on Repeal of Presidential Public Financing Law, July 22, 2013. The League joined reform groups in sending a letter to the U.S. House of Representatives urging them to vote no on H.R. 2019. The letter argues the bill would repeal an important anti-corruption campaign finance law, which worked well for most of its existence and provided ordinary Americans with a critical role to play in financing presidential elections.³²

H.R. 270³³, Introduced January 15, 2013, co-Sponsored by WA Rep. McDermott, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the system of public financing for Presidential elections, to establish a system of public financing for Congressional elections, to promote the disclosure of disbursements made in coordination with campaigns for election for Federal office, and for other purposes. Died in House Ways and Means committee; WA Reps. Reichert and McDermott on the committee.

League Urges Representatives to Co-Sponsor H.R. 270, March 24, 2014: The League joined with reform groups to ask Representatives to Co-Sponsor H.R. 270, the Empowering Citizens Act. *“H.R. 270 is the most comprehensive campaign finance reform legislation pending in Congress. It would end individual candidate Super PACs, repair the presidential public financing system, create a similar financing system for congressional races and strengthen the rules prohibiting coordination between outside spending groups and candidates.”* <http://lww.org/content/league-urges-representatives-co-sponsor-hr-270>

2012

H.R. 6426³⁴, sponsored by Rep. Sarbanes, introduced September 14, 2012, to reform the financing of Congressional elections by encouraging grassroots participation in the funding of campaigns, and for other purposes. Died in House Committee on Ways and Means; WA Reps. Reichert and McGovern on the committee.

2011

H.R. 395: *To reduce Federal spending and the deficit by terminating taxpayer financing of presidential election campaigns ...and party conventions*, was introduced by Representative Cole, January 20, 2011.

³¹ H.R. 2019 – Gabriella Miller Kids First Research Act, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/hr2019>, viewed 04/26/16

³² “League Urges U.S. House to Vote No of Presidential Public Financing Law”, *League of Women Voters*, <http://lww.org/content/league-urges-us-house-vote-no-repeal-presidential-public-financing-law>, viewed 12/14/15

³³ H.R. 270 – Empowering Citizens Act, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/270>, viewed 12/14/15

³⁴ H.R. 6426 – Grassroots Democracy Act of 2012, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/112/hr6426>, viewed 04/26/16

It passed the House 239-160. Voting yea: WA Representatives Herrera Beutler, Hastings, McMorris Rodgers, Reichert; voting nay: WA Representatives Inslee, Larsen, Dicks, McDermott, Smith.

S. 194: An identical companion bill, was introduced in the Senate on January 26, 2011, by Senator McConnell, but **died** in the Senate Finance Committee. WA Senator Maria Cantwell on committee.

H.R. 414³⁵, sponsored by WA Rep. David Price, January 25, 2011, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the system of public financing for Presidential elections, and for other purposes. Died in House Ways and Means committee; WA Reps. Reichert and McDermott on committee.

House Set to Repeal Presidential Campaign Finance System, January 26, 2011. A League of Women Voters press release states, *“The League of Women Voters today urged members of the U.S. House of Representatives to oppose the move expected this week to eliminate the public financing system for presidential elections. Pointing to the lack of hearings or other committee action on the legislation to repeal the presidential system, Elisabeth MacNamara, president of the nonpartisan citizens’ organization, said, “The rush to the floor, without following the normal procedures of the House, is deeply disturbing. The American people deserve better than this.”*³⁶

H.R. 1404³⁷, sponsored by Rep. Larson, cosponsored by WA Reps. Smith and McDermott, introduced April 6, 2011, The Fair Elections Now Act, to reform the financing of House elections, and for other purposes. Died in the House Committee on House Administration.

S. 750³⁸, Fair Elections Now Act, sponsored by Sen. Durbin, introduced April 6, 2011, a bill to reform the financing of Senate elections, and for other purposes. Died in the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration.

H.R. 3463³⁹, sponsored by Rep. Gregg Harper, introduced November 17, 2011, to reduce Federal spending and the deficit by terminating taxpayer financing of presidential election campaigns and party conventions and by terminating the Election Assistance Commission. Passed in the House. Voting nay: WA Reps. Inslee, Larsen, Dicks, McDermott, Smith; voting aye: WA Reps. Herrera Beutler, Hastings, McMorris Rodgers, Reichert. Died in Senate Committee on Rules and Administration.

Reform Groups Urge You to Vote No on H.R. 3463 This Week, November 30, 2011. The League of Women Voters and other concerned organizations oppose H.R. 3463, legislation that would repeal the presidential public financing system and terminate the Election Assistance Commission.⁴⁰

³⁵ H.R. 414 – Presidential Funding Act, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/112th-congress/house-bill/414> , viewed 12/14/15

³⁶ “House Set to Repeal Presidential Campaign Finance System, League of Women Voters of US”, January 26, 2011, <http://lwv.org/press-releases/house-set-repeal-presidential-campaign-finance-system>, viewed 12/18/15

³⁷ H.R. 1404 – Fair Elections Act Now, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/112th-congress/house-bill/1404> , viewed 12/14/15

³⁸ S. 750 – Fair Elections Now Act (2011), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/112th-congress/senate-bill/750> , viewed 12/14/15

³⁹ H.R. 3463 (2011), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/112th-congress/house-bill/3463> , viewed 12/14/15

⁴⁰ “Save Presidential Public Financing and the Election Assistance Commission”, *League of Women Voters*, <http://lwv.org/content/save-presidential-public-financing-and-election-assistance-commission>, viewed 12/14/15

2010

H.R. 6116⁴¹, Fair Elections Now Act, sponsored by Rep. Larson, introduced September 14, 2010, to reform the financing of House elections, and for other purposes. Died in the House Energy and Commerce and House - House Administration Committees.

H.R. 1826⁴², Fair Elections Now Act, introduced March 31, 2009; Sponsored Rep. Larson, cosponsored by WA Reps. Smith and McDermott, to reform the financing of House elections, and for other purposes. Died in the House Energy and Commerce Communications and Technology subcommittee, House - House Administration and House Ways and Means Committees.

S. 3681⁴³, sponsored by Sen. Feingold, introduced July 30, 2010, A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the system of public financing for Presidential elections, and for other purposes. Died in Senate Finance Committee.

Some elected officials have been fighting for public financing of campaigns for years. The Fair Election Act has been reintroduced over and over. 2007 is as far back as this report will go, and these bills were reintroduced in 2008 and 2009. Delving in to historical data is interesting and revealing.

2007

Delving in to historical data is interesting and revealing. Some elected officials have been fighting for public financing of campaigns for years. For example, these bills were introduced in 2007.

S. 436⁴⁴, sponsored by Sens. Feingold and Obama, introduced on January 30, 2007; died in Senate Finance Committee. The Presidential Funding Act of 2007 would:

- Raise spending limits for the presidential primary and general election.
- Increase the amount of public matching funds available during the primary process.
- Allow earlier access to public funds in the primary process.
- Provide additional funds to publicly financed candidates who are significantly outspent by privately financed candidates.
- Increase the check-off from \$3 to \$10 for individuals and \$6 to \$20 for couples.
- Prohibit national parties from raising or spending soft money for party nominating conventions.

H.R.776⁴⁵, Presidential Funding Act of 2007, sponsored by Rep. Meehan, introduced on January 31, 2007; To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the system of public financing for

⁴¹ H.R. 6116 – Fair Elections Now Act (2010), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/111th-congress/house-bill/6116> , viewed 12/14/15

⁴² H.R. 1826 – Fair Elections Now Act (2009), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/111th-congress/house-bill/1826> , viewed 12/14/15

⁴³ S. 3681 – Presidential Funding Act of 2010, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/111th-congress/senate-bill/3681> , viewed 12/14/15

⁴⁴ S. 436 – Presidential Funding Act of 2007, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/110th-congress/senate-bill/436> , viewed 12/14/15

⁴⁵ H.R. 776 – Presidential Funding Act of 2007, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/110/hr776> , viewed 12/14/15

Presidential elections, and for other purposes. Died in House - House Administration and House Ways and Means Committees.

S. 2412⁴⁶, Presidential Funding Act of 2007, sponsored by Sen. Feingold, cosponsored by Sens. Obama, Clinton, Kerry, Biden, Collins, Durbin, Dodd; introduced Dec 5, 2007; died in Senate Finance Committee.

H.R. 4294⁴⁷, Presidential Funding Act of 2007, sponsored by Rep. Price, introduced Dec 5, 2007; To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the system of public financing for Presidential elections, and for other purposes. Died in House - House Administration and House Ways and Means Committees.

S. 936⁴⁸, Fair Elections Now Act, sponsored Sen. Durbin, introduced March 20, 2007, a bill to reform the financing of Senate elections, and for other purposes. Died in Senate Finance Committee.

Reform groups sent a letter to all members of Congress, urging them to support the legislation that was introduced today by Senator Russ Feingold (D-WI) and Representatives Marty Meehan (D-MA) and Christopher Shays (R-CT) to fix the presidential public financing system. The groups include the Campaign Legal Center, Common Cause, Democracy 21, the League of Women Voters, Public Citizen and U.S. PIRG. According to the letter from reform groups,

“The presidential public financing system was created in 1974 in the wake of the Watergate scandals and served the nation well for most of its existence. The system, however, is now broken and in need of repair.” The letter states, *“At a time when corruption scandals continue to unfold in Washington and deeply concern the American people, it makes no sense to abandon a presidential financing system that has played a major role in protecting the integrity of the presidency and that can be repaired to play the same critical role in the future.”*⁴⁹

⁴⁶ H.R. 2412 – Presidential Funding Act of 2007 <https://www.congress.gov/bill/110th-congress/senate-bill/2412> , viewed 12/14/15

⁴⁷ H.R. 4294 – Presidential Funding Act of 2007, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/110th-congress/house-bill/4294> , viewed 12/14/15

⁴⁸ S. 936 – Fair Election Now Act (2007), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/110th-congress/senate-bill/936> , viewed 12/14/15

⁴⁹ “New Legislation Introduced Today by Feingold, Meehan and Shays to Fix the Presidential Public Financing System”, *Democracy 21*, <http://www.democracy21.org/archives/issues/presidential-public-financing/new-legislation-introduced-today-by-feingold-meehan-and-shays-to-fix-the-presidential-public-financing-system-2/>, viewed 12/14/15