



For Immediate Release
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"Common Cause in Connecticut is pleased that the Government Administration and Elections Committee is holding an informational hearing to take up the critical issue of the landmark Citizen's Election Program in the wake of a district court ruling in August," said Cheri Quickmire, Executive Director of Common Cause Connecticut.

Common Cause is working actively with Attorney General Richard Blumenthal's office in the *Green Party of Connecticut et al v. Jeffrey Garfield* case as an Intervenor represented by the Brennan Center. "While we are grateful that the Attorney General is fighting to appeal to the Second Circuit Court of Appeals a damaging district court decision, we believe that we cannot wait the outcome of that appeal before acting to ensure the viability of the Citizens Election fund," said Karen Hobert Flynn, Vice President for the national office of Common Cause.

We believe that we must act quickly to fix the law and that we cannot wait for the outcome of the appeal for a number of reasons.

1. This is a highly complex legal case. The 2nd Circuit will take time to deliberate. Legal experts that we work with suggest that a decision probably will not be reached until at least April of 2010. In addition, plaintiffs will undoubtedly want to challenge the appeal and take the case straight to the Supreme Court, which will drag this case on well beyond 2010 elections.
2. Candidates who want to run for statewide office for the first time under the program need to know the program is viable. Uncertainty will inhibit participation by legislative candidates as well.
3. The State Elections Enforcement Commission will need time to reconfigure the program in time for candidates who would like to participate.
4. Although the General Assembly modified a reversion clause in 2006, Section 9-717 is still in place. On April 15 if the CEP is still enjoined, the law will revert back to pre-2005 until December 2010, opening the doors to special interests, lobbyist and state contractor money and a return to pre-reform days.

"Connecticut has come a long way from the days of "Corrupticut" to become a nationwide leader on comprehensive reform," said Quickmire. "We believe it is incumbent on us to find a way to address any questions of constitutionality."

Hobert Flynn added, "There are a number of constitutionally permissible options that give lawmakers many avenues to explore a permanent fix or a temporary fix that allows the program to move forward in 2010. We urge the General Assembly make these changes as soon as feasible before we get too far into the election."