

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
  
12  
13  
  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20

H.793

Introduced by Representatives Sharpe of Bristol, Christie of Hartford,  
Manwaring of Wilmington, and Till of Jericho

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Elections; campaign finance; public financing option; qualifying  
contributions; matching contributions

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to amend the  
State's public campaign finance option so that the State would provide a  
\$12.00 grant for each \$1.00 of a candidate's qualifying contributions, up to a  
total maximum grant amount.

An act relating to matching State grants under the public campaign finance  
option

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 17 V.S.A. § 2984 is amended to read:

§ 2984. QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTIONS

(a) In order to qualify for Vermont campaign finance grants, a candidate for  
the office of Governor or Lieutenant Governor shall obtain during the Vermont  
campaign finance qualification period the following amount and number of  
qualifying contributions for the office being sought:

1           (1) for Governor, a total amount of no less than \$35,000.00 collected  
2           from no fewer than 1,500 qualified individual contributors making a  
3           contribution of no more than \$50.00 each; or

4           (2) for Lieutenant Governor, a total amount of no less than \$17,500.00  
5           collected from no fewer than 750 qualified individual contributors making a  
6           contribution of no more than \$50.00 each.

7           (b)(1) A candidate shall not accept more than one qualifying contribution  
8           from the same contributor and a contributor shall not make more than one  
9           qualifying contribution to the same candidate in any Vermont campaign  
10          finance qualification period.

11          (2) For the purpose of this section, a qualified individual contributor  
12          means an individual who is registered to vote in Vermont.

13          (3) No more than 25 percent of the total number of qualified individual  
14          contributors may be residents of the same county.

15          (c) Each qualifying contribution shall indicate the name and town of  
16          residence of the contributor and the date accepted and be acknowledged by the  
17          signature of the contributor.

18          (d)(1) A candidate may retain and expend qualifying contributions obtained  
19          under this section.

1           (2) A candidate may expend the qualifying contributions for the purpose  
2 of obtaining additional qualifying contributions and may expend the remaining  
3 qualifying contributions during the primary and general election periods.

4           (3) Amounts expended under this subsection shall be considered  
5 expenditures for purposes of this chapter.

6 Sec. 2. 17 V.S.A. § 2985 is amended to read:

7 § 2985. VERMONT CAMPAIGN FINANCE GRANTS; AMOUNTS;  
8           TIMING

9           (a)(1) The Secretary of State shall make grants from the Secretary of State  
10 Services Fund in separate grants for the primary and general election periods to  
11 candidates who have qualified for Vermont campaign finance grants under this  
12 subchapter.

13           (2)(A) To cover any campaign finance grants to candidates who have  
14 qualified under this subchapter, the Secretary of State shall report to the  
15 Commissioner of Finance and Management, who shall anticipate receipts to  
16 the Services Fund and issue warrants to pay for those grants.

17           (B) The Commissioner shall report any such anticipated receipts and  
18 warrants issued under this subdivision to the Joint Fiscal Committee on or  
19 before December 1 of the year in which the warrants were issued.

20           **(b)(1)** Whether a candidate has entered a primary or is an independent  
21 candidate, Vermont campaign finance grants shall be in the following amounts:

1           ~~(1)(A)~~ For Governor, \$12.00 for each \$1.00 of qualifying contributions  
2           obtained, up to a total of \$150,000.00 in a primary election period and of  
3           \$450,000.00 in a general election period,~~provided that the grant for a primary~~  
4           ~~election period shall be reduced by an amount equal to the candidate's~~  
5           ~~qualifying contributions.~~ The Secretary of State shall provide one-third of the  
6           total amount for the primary election period grant and the remaining two-thirds  
7           for the general election period grant.

8           ~~(2)(B)~~ For Lieutenant Governor, \$12.00 for each \$1.00 of qualifying  
9           contributions obtained, up to a total of \$50,000.00 in a primary election period  
10           and \$150,000.00 in a general election period,~~provided that the grant for a~~  
11           ~~primary election period shall be reduced by an amount equal to the candidate's~~  
12           ~~qualifying contributions;.~~ The Secretary of State shall provide one-third of the  
13           total amount for the primary election period grant and the remaining two-thirds  
14           for the general election period grant.

15           ~~(3)(2)~~ A candidate who is an incumbent of the office being sought shall  
16           be entitled to receive a grant in an amount equal to 85 percent of the amount  
17           listed in subdivision (1) ~~or (2)~~ of this subsection.

18           (c) In an uncontested general election and in the case of a candidate who  
19           enters a primary election and is unsuccessful in that election, an otherwise  
20           eligible candidate shall not be eligible for a general election period grant.  
21           However, such candidate may solicit and accept contributions and make

1 expenditures as follows: contributions shall be subject to the limitations set  
2 forth in subchapter 3 of this chapter, and expenditures shall be limited to an  
3 amount equal to the amount of the grant set forth in subsection (b) of this  
4 section for the general election for that office.

5 (d) Grants awarded in a primary election period but not expended by the  
6 candidate in the primary election period may be expended by the candidate in  
7 the general election period.

8 (e)(1) Vermont campaign finance grants for a primary election period shall  
9 be paid to qualifying candidates within the first 10 business days of the  
10 primary election period.

11 (2) Vermont campaign finance grants for a general election period shall  
12 be paid to qualifying candidates during the first 10 business days of the general  
13 election period.

14 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

15 This act shall take effect on January 1, 2017.