



Important Law Changes Pursuant to Public Act 17-2 (June Special Session)

On October 31, 2017, the Governor signed Public Act 2017-2 (June Special Session) into law which makes changes to the grant qualifications and amounts under the Citizens' Election Program ("CEP"), as well as to the lottery methodology for post-election reviews and the Commission's complaint procedures. In certain instances, the changes to the CEP are implemented in later election cycles and thus for purposes of this summary, the changes are broken down by the upcoming 2018 election cycle and subsequent cycles.

CEP CHANGES AFFECTING THE 2018 CYCLE

Maximum Qualifying Contribution Amounts for General Assembly Candidates [Section 276]

The maximum qualifying contribution amount that candidates running for state senate or state representative may raise from individuals increases from \$100 to \$250. Please note that other limits on qualifying contributions, including the \$100 limit for contributions from communicator lobbyists, still apply.

Candidates running for statewide office (Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, State Treasurer, and Secretary of the State) remain limited to the \$100 maximum individual qualifying contribution amount during the 2018 election cycle.

Total Qualifying Contribution Threshold Amounts [Section 276]

The total amount of qualifying contributions that must be raised by candidates running for Attorney General, State Comptroller, State Treasurer, Secretary of the State, state senate or state representative will now be adjusted according to the consumer price index (CPI), rounded to the nearest \$100 increment. In the case of the aforementioned statewide office candidates, the amount that must come from contributors within the state will also be adjusted for CPI. The exact amounts will be available on the Commission's website in early 2018 after the CPI for December 2017 has been released.

As a point of reference, adjusting the threshold amounts according to the CPI released in *October* 2017 would require statewide office candidates to raise \$76,600 total in qualifying contributions, of which \$69,000 must be from in-state, senate candidates to raise \$15,300, and state representative candidates to raise \$5,100. Again, the official amounts will be released in early 2018.

The total amount of qualifying contributions that must be raised by Governor and Lieutenant Governor candidates will *not* be adjusted in 2018.

Grant Amounts [Sections 268 – 273]

For 2018, grant amounts will *not* be adjusted according to the consumer price index. Absent such indexing, the base grant amounts set forth in the statutes apply:

- Governor: \$6 million for the general election (\$1.25 million for the primary)
- Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, State Treasurer, and Secretary of the State: \$750,000 for the general election (\$375,000 for the primary)¹
- State Senate: \$85,000 for the general election (\$35,000 for the primary / \$75,000 if a party-dominant primary)
- State Representative: \$25,000 the general election (\$10,000 for the primary / \$25,000 if a party-dominant primary)

Grant Reduction Schedule Based on Application Date [Section 272]

While the previous section outlines the total grant amount that a candidate committee would be eligible for if qualified, the Act also implements a grant reduction schedule so the later a campaign applies for a grant, the smaller the grant it will be eligible to receive.

Specifically, campaigns will receive the following percentage of the grant they are otherwise eligible to receive if they submit their application during agency hours according to the following schedule:

- Applications received prior to the 70th day preceding the election (on or before 8/27/18): 100% of grant
- Applications received on or after the 70th day but before the 56th day preceding the election (between 8/28/18 and 9/10/18): 75% of grant
- Applications received on or after the 56th day but before the 42nd day preceding the election (between 9/11/18 and 9/24/18): 65% of grant
- Applications received between on or after the 42nd day but before the 28th day preceding the election (between 9/25/18 and 10/5/18*): 55% of grant
- Applications received on or after the 28th day preceding the election and by the last deadline date (between 10/9/18 and 10/12/18): 40% of grant

A more complete chart, including the actual grant amounts, will be available in a separate document. This reduction schedule is effective for 2018 and for all subsequent election cycles, for both statewide office and General Assembly campaigns.

*Note that in 2018, the 28th day before the election is preceded by a holiday and therefore applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 5, 2018, to qualify for a 55% grant.

¹ Lieutenant Governor candidates join with the Gubernatorial committees for the general election and thus do not receive a separate general election grant.

Special Elections [Section 276]²

Candidate committees in special elections occurring during the 2018 election cycle and beyond will also be affected by the grant reduction schedule mentioned above. Such committees are already entitled only to 75% of the full applicable grant amount and that amount will be further reduced depending on when they apply for their grant:

- Applications received on or after the 56th day but before the 42nd day before the special election: 65% of 75% grant
- Applications received on or after the 42nd day but before the 28th day before the special election: 55% of 75% grant

Please note that because a writ of election must be issued before the Commission may issue a grant and the writ may only be issued up to 56 days prior to the election date, special election candidate committees will never be eligible for either the full 75% grant or 75% of the 75% of the grant.

CEP CHANGES AFFECTING FUTURE ELECTION CYCLES

Maximum Qualifying Contribution Amounts for General Assembly Candidates [Section 276]

General Assembly campaigns will continue to have a qualifying contribution limit from individuals of \$250, which will be adjusted for CPI starting in 2020 (using 2017 as the base year in the calculation), rounded to the nearest \$10 increment.

In 2022, the next statewide election year, all statewide office campaigns will be able to raise qualifying contributions up to \$250 from individuals. This amount will also be adjusted for CPI starting in 2022 (using 2017 as the base year), rounding to the nearest \$10 increment.

It is instructive to look at what the maximum qualifying contribution amounts would be today had the \$250 maximum and CPI adjustments been part of the law since the Program was passed:

Office	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016	2018
General Assembly	\$250	\$260	\$270	\$280	\$280	~\$290
Statewide		\$260		\$280		~\$290

Total Qualifying Contribution Threshold Amounts [Section 276]

In 2022 and beyond, Governor and Lieutenant Governor campaigns will join the other statewide office and General Assembly campaigns in having the qualifying threshold raised (the total amount of qualifying contributions they must obtain from individuals to help demonstrate public support), as well as the amount that must be raised from individuals residing in the state, adjusted for CPI (using 2017 as the base year), rounded to the nearest \$100 increment.

² There is legislation pending to address this. See Senate Bill 1503.

Again, it is helpful in understanding this change to look at what the qualifying thresholds would be today had the CPI adjustments to these thresholds been part of the law since the Program was passed:

Office	2008	2010 plus ~ 2.8%	2012 plus ~ 7.44%	2014 plus ~ 11.34%/8.3%	2016 plus ~ 12.6%	2018 (through 9/17) plus at least 17.5%/14.3%
Representative	\$5,000	\$5,100	\$5,400	\$5,600	\$5,600	\$5,900
Senator	\$15,000	\$15,400	\$16,100	\$16,700	\$16,900	\$17,600
Constitutionals		\$75,000		\$81,200		\$88,100
Governor		\$250,000		\$270,800		\$293,800

*Under new law, round to nearest hundred

Grant Amounts [Sections 268 – 273]

For 2020 and forward, grant amounts will be adjusted for CPI for all statewide office and General Assembly campaigns, with 2010 and 2008 continuing to be used as the respective base years in the calculation.

CHANGES TO SEEC OVERSIGHT

Weighted Lottery for Post-Election Reviews [Section 275]

The Act also modifies the formula the Commission will use in selecting General Assembly candidate committees for post-election reviews. Going forward, the randomized lottery will be weighted by taking into account the frequency with which a particular legislative district was reviewed during the last three preceding regular elections for that office.

One-Year Provision for Handling Complaints [Section 274]

Finally, the Act changes the Commission's complaint procedures. The Act provides that for any complaints received on or after January 1, 2018, if the Commission does not issue a decision on the complaint within one year of receiving it, the Commission must dismiss the complaint. That time may be extended by the length of time it takes for: (i) the Commission or its staff granting any extension or continuance to a respondent prior to the issuance of a decision; (ii) any subpoena being issued in connection with the complaint; (iii) any litigation in state or federal court related to the complaint; or (iv) any investigation by or consultation of the Commission or its staff with the Chief State's Attorney, the Attorney General, the United States Department of Justice, or the United States Attorney for Connecticut related to such complaint.

In the event of a complaint being filed, respondents, including treasurers, should be prepared and organized to immediately respond to requests for information from the Commission in order to comply with the new statutory deadline.

Please note that this summary is not a substitute for the law and readers are encouraged to read the relevant portions of [Public Act 17-2 \(June Special Session\)](#). The Office of Legislative Research's [Bill Analysis](#), which is available on the Connecticut General Assembly website, also provides a summary of the Act.