



Center for Governmental Studies
Solutions for Democracy

Public Financing in American Elections
Selected Bibliography

Background

The Center for Governmental Studies' *Public Financing in American Elections* series is part of a multi-year comparative research project which analyzes the effectiveness of public financing laws adopted in jurisdictions in the United States. The reports provide a detailed examination of the strengths and weaknesses of public financing laws in practice, with suggestions for improvements, modifications and reform. CGS works with civic groups and governmental organizations to assist them in improving their existing public financing laws or adopting new ones. The series is generously funded by grants from The Carnegie Corporation of New York.*

CGS has published several reports including a primer on public financing, a report on new sources of money to sustain public campaign financing systems, and extensive reviews of several local public financing laws currently in place. CGS is continuing its analysis of key state and local public campaign financing laws across the nation.

Reports

Keeping it Clean: Public Financing in American Elections (2006)

This report is the first comprehensive effort to analyze and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of state and local public campaign financing systems in the United States. This report concludes that public campaign financing can resolve many of the campaign finance and electoral problems that currently plague the political process.

State Public Campaign Financing Laws -- Summary Charts (2005)

Charts summarizing the key features of various types of public financing programs currently on the books in twenty-five states in the United States.

Public Financing Laws in Local Jurisdictions -- Summary Chart (2005)

Chart summarizing the laws of the thirteen local jurisdictions in the United States that have public financing programs.

Political Reform That Works: Public Campaign Financing Blooms in Tucson (2003)

Tucson's public campaign financing system, enacted in 1985, is a major success and can serve as

a model for small- and medium-sized cities throughout the United States. This report explores the successes of Tucson's law and recommends reforms to enhance its effectiveness.

Investing in Democracy (2003)

This handbook helps elected officials, government administrators, grassroots organizations and activists create or improve existing public financing systems for their own state and local elections. It describes the history of public financing in state and local governments, advantages and shortcomings of existing systems, a variety of funding mechanisms, potential legal issues and strategies for implementing reforms.

A Statute of Liberty: How New York City's Campaign Finance Law is Changing the Face of Local Elections (2003)

New York City's successful public campaign financing law has attracted new participants and competition in city elections and offers a model for other cities to follow. However, the emergence of wealthy candidates and independent expenditures, coupled with weak state campaign finance laws, have created loopholes in the city's program that lawmakers must close if New York City is to remain among the nation's reform leaders.

Public Financing of Elections: Where to Get the Money? (2003)

This report describes over 40 creative new funding sources to support public campaign finance systems. Based on interviews with dozens of state and national fiscal and campaign finance experts, ideas include income tax surcharges on millionaires, increased civil and criminal fines, surcharges on punitive damage awards, tax amnesty programs, public campaign financing bonds, 100% tax credits, "Democracy Endowments," "Patriot Credit Cards" and free time on city-operated cable television channels.

Dead On Arrival? Breathing Life into Suffolk County's New Campaign Finance Reforms (2002)

This report closely examines the public financing law in New York's Suffolk County. The CGS report found that, if properly funded, the County's campaign finance law could slow runaway campaign spending, reduce the undue influence of wealthy donors and amplify the political voice of individuals. But the current funding base for the program is so insufficient that, unless changes are implemented, the system is dead on arrival.

On the Brink of Clean: Launching San Francisco's New Campaign Finance Reforms (2002)

This report examines San Francisco's campaign finance law, which created the first city's publicly financed elections in November 2002. Based on six months of study, the report proposes a series of reforms to close loopholes in the law and preserve the intent of voters who approved San Francisco's public financing system through passage of Proposition O in 2000.

Eleven Years of Reform: Many Successes, More to be Done (2001)

This report analyzes campaign finance reform and public financing laws in Los Angeles, CA.

**The views expressed in these reports do not necessarily reflect the views of the Carnegie Corporation of New York and it takes no responsibility for any of the statements in the reports.*