

Women's Advocacy Day Supports Voter-Owned Elections

Last Year, NC Women United helped pass a Voter-Owned Elections pilot program for some of our state's top executive offices.

- Voter-Owned Elections, or public campaign financing, provides qualified candidates who prove community support with public money to run for office.
- It's an alternative way of financing campaigns that ends the dependence on PACs and special interest money. By ending the reliance on special interests, more community-oriented candidates can get elected and grassroots advocates are strengthened.
- Because men have dominated politics for most of our history, it is difficult for many women to raise the money needed to competitively run for office. Public financing levels the playing field and gives women more of an equal chance.
- Voter-Owned Elections are supported by NC Women United, Planned Parenthood, NARAL, Church Women United and the NC Business and Professional Women Association.
- When special interest money dominates the political scene, the good-ole-boy network flourishes. When campaigns are funded by the public and small donors, a democratic network of participating, concerned citizens flourishes.

How does it work?

- *Candidates refuse all PAC money and large donations and collect hundreds of small contributions from voters in their community to prove their support.*
- *If all qualifications are met, candidates receive a public campaign grant. Candidates cease fundraising, and concentrate only on grassroots campaigning.*
- *Once elected, candidates have the peace of mind of knowing they don't owe anybody any favors because of campaign donations. The public knows that powerful special interest groups aren't using campaign money to influence their elected officials.*

North Carolina progress

Since 2002, public financing has been available for the NC Court of Appeals and NC Supreme Court. Beginning this year, public financing is available for Commissioner of Insurance, State Auditor, and Schools Superintendent. After years of extreme under-representation, public financing is a tool many women are using to successfully get elected to statewide office. Since passage we have seen over a dozen women run under the program for appellate judge and Council of State.

What do to?

- **Tell your legislators that Voter-Owned Elections are working in North Carolina for judges and Council of State, with broad, bi-partisan participation.**
- **Tell your legislators we need to expand the program to all elections in North Carolina including the legislature and full Council of State**

Prepared by NC Voters for Clean Elections. Visit www.ncvce.org for more info.