

Rep. Jil Tracy Newsletter

November 2, 2009

Campaign Finance Changes Fail to Meet Standards for Real Reform

Springfield, IL...On Thursday, State Representative Jil Tracy (R-Quincy) expressed her frustration with the recent negotiations to craft a responsible campaign finance reform proposal for the state of Illinois. "I felt this was the year we had a real chance to enact meaningful ethical changes to Illinois' political system. However, the proposal we saw today was more business as usual, full of loopholes and a disingenuous attempt to create the appearance of reform while maintaining the status quo," said Rep. Tracy.

Senate Bill 1466, sponsored by Democrat Speaker Michael Madigan, includes campaign contribution caps for individuals, corporations, unions and political action committees, but does not limit contributions from a political party or caucus PAC to a candidate. So state parties and legislative leaders will still be free to give unlimited campaign cash to their preferred candidates.

"Campaign finance reform must maintain the goal of reducing the influence of money in politics. This legislation failed to meet that goal," said Representative Tracy. "As recent history has proven, Speaker Madigan will not jeopardize the tight control he retains over the House and his members. That very control is due to his ability to dole out unlimited campaign dollars to legislators for their election bids. In return for those favorable contributions, those same legislators vote in lock step with the Speaker."

While SB 1466 limits party/caucus contributions to candidates during a primary election, it allows for unlimited contributions during a general election. Political parties normally do not spend large sums of money during primary campaigns, but often dump millions of dollars during general elections to retain incumbent districts or gain additional seats. The vast and disparate amounts of money spent by party leaders can be easily viewed at the Illinois State Board of Elections website.

Rep. Tracy and the House Republicans offered alternatives to the proposal, which would limit state party and caucus contributions for both the primary and general campaigns, but the Democrat controlled House refused to allow discussion of such measures.

For more information about the campaign, please visit my website at www.electjiltracy.com My email is jiltracy@yahoo.com

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