

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 446

By Buck

A RESOLUTION to create a special joint committee to study campaign financing and specifically, the "Voter-Owned Elections Act".

WHEREAS, to ensure the equal and meaningful participation of all citizens in the democratic process, the "Voter-Owned Elections Act" (House Bill 1126/Senate Bill 1645 of the 105th General Assembly) seeks to establish the Tennessee Democracy Fund as an alternative source of campaign financing for candidates who obtain a sufficient number of qualifying contributions from registered voters and who voluntarily accept strict fund-raising and spending limits; and

WHEREAS, to be administered by the Registry of Election Finance under the provisions of the Act, the Tennessee Democracy Fund would be available to candidates for the General Assembly and candidates for Governor; candidates participating in this fund would also be required to comply with all other applicable election and campaign laws and rules; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that this General Assembly ensure the vitality and fairness of democratic elections in Tennessee, to the end that any eligible citizen of this state can realistically choose to seek and run for public office; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly should act to protect the constitutional rights of voters and candidates from the detrimental effects of increasingly large amounts of money being raised and spent in Tennessee to influence the outcome of elections; and

WHEREAS, because campaign financing has become such an important part of the electoral process, an exhaustive study of the topic and this innovative legislation should be conducted; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE

CONCURRING, that there is hereby created a special joint committee to study campaign financing. As the basis for its study, the committee shall utilize the "Voter-Owned Elections Act" (House Bill 1126/Senate Bill 1645 of the 105th General Assembly), which creates a voluntary system for public funding of political campaigns for General Assembly and Governor in Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee shall consist of three (3) members of the House of Representatives, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; three (3) members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Speaker of the Senate; and three (3) members to be appointed by the Governor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all appropriate state agencies shall provide assistance to the special joint committee upon request of the chair.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all legislative members of the special joint committee who are duly elected members of the General Assembly shall remain members of such committee until the committee reports its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special joint committee shall be convened by the member with the most years of continuous service in the General Assembly, and at its first meeting shall elect a chair, vice-chair, and such other officers the committee deems necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special joint committee shall timely report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the One Hundred Fifth General Assembly no later than February 1, 2008, at which time the committee shall cease to exist.