

N.C. Voters for Clean Elections

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Key Numbers for Council of State Public Financing, July 2008

The Voter-Owned Elections Pilot Act of 2007 creates a pilot public financing program for candidates running for Commissioner of Insurance, State Auditor, and Superintendent of Public Instruction in 2008. Under the program, candidates can receive a public grant to run their campaigns if they collect hundreds of small donations, follow strict spending and fundraising limits, and win their party's primary.

Broad Participation by Candidates in 2008 Primary

- **Nine of 11 candidates** running for Commissioner of Insurance, State Auditor, and Superintendent of Public Instruction “opted into” the program during the primary.
- These candidates included: **two women, seven men; two African-Americans, seven Caucasians; three Republicans, six Democrats; two incumbents, seven challengers.**
- **All of the candidates** running for State Auditor and Commissioner of Insurance opted in; many of the candidates said they would not have run without the program.

2008 primary candidates (Race/Sex/Party) Who “Opted In”

<i>Insurance:</i>	Wayne Goodwin (W/M/D)	David Smith (W/M/D)	John Odom(W/M/R)
<i>Superintendent:</i>	June Atkinson (i) (W/F/D)	Eddie Davis (B/M/D)	Eric Smith (W/M/R)
<i>Auditor:</i>	Beth Wood (W/F/D)	Fred Aikens (B/M/D)	Les Merritt (i) (W/M/R)

Two of Three Voter-Owned in 2008 Election

- **4 of 6 candidates (67%)** who will be on the general election ballot for these three Council of State offices enrolled and qualified for the program.¹ These candidates are Republicans John Odom and Les Merritt and Democrats Wayne Goodwin and June Atkinson.
- Voter-Owned candidates will receive **\$380,409 each for the Commissioner of Insurance** race and **\$300,000 each for the State Auditor and Superintendent of Public Instruction** races. They will also be eligible for matching money of **up to 200%** of these amounts if they're outspent by non-participating opponents or by independent expenditures that meet certain criteria. This money comes from a publicly-supported source and is not tainted by policy expectations or special interest industry ties.
- Voter-Owned candidates are **barred from all fundraising** from May 6th until the election, and can focus 100% of their energy on **grassroots campaigning and listening to voters.**

Voters Authorize Voter-Owned Elections

To receive public money, candidates had to be “authorized” by voters through small donations and raise at least 750 contributions between \$10 and \$200 from registered voters in NC that totaled at least \$29,750 and no more than \$239,802 in a contested primary (or \$119,901 in an uncontested primary).

- Candidates went well beyond the minimum, raising money from record numbers of voters. The four candidates who qualified raised approximately **4,376 qualifying donations that averaged \$47.22 each.**
- These grassroots donations come from **registered voters in NC** who live in **all 100 counties.**

Approximate # of Voters Who Gave Qualifying Donations; # of Counties represented by small donors (approx.)

June Atkinson – 975 voters (78 counties)	Les Merritt – 1,133 voters (100 counties)
John Odom – 1,132 voters (77 counties)	Wayne Goodwin – 1,136 voters (73 counties)

¹ Beth Wood opted in but did not fulfill all of the fundraising requirements for the Voter-Owned Elections program.