

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of Campaign and Political Finance

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Patrick, Mihos to receive public funds for general election

Two candidates for governor have been certified to receive public funds for the general election campaign, the Office of Campaign and Political Finance announced today.

Democrat Deval Patrick and unenrolled candidate Christy Mihos have each submitted the required amount of qualifying contributions to be certified to receive matching funds from the State Election Campaign Fund (SECF).

Under the public financing law, M.G.L. Chapter 55C, each gubernatorial candidate who agrees to observe a statutory spending limit and submits the minimum amount of contributions is eligible to receive up to \$750,000 in matching funds for the general election. However, the SECF, which is funded by a taxpayer checkoff on state income tax returns, does not contain the \$1.5 million that would be needed to fully fund both of the eligible candidates this year.

The two candidates will instead split the \$806,844 in public funds that is available for the general election campaign. Patrick has submitted enough matching funds to receive his full share of \$403,422, but Mihos has so far submitted only enough funds to receive \$133,960.

Nevertheless, the statute requires OCPF to set aside a full allotment of \$403,422 for possible distribution to Mihos. He may file further qualifying contributions until Friday, Oct. 20.

The public financing law calls for candidates for governor to be funded first, with any remaining funds to be distributed to candidates for the other statewide offices who are eligible to receive public financing. Because the distributions to Patrick and Mihos have depleted the general election fund, however, today's certification means no public funds are available for any other statewide candidates who had agreed to statutory spending limits in return for eligibility for public funds. Any funds that were set aside for Mihos, but are ultimately not released to him, must be returned to the State Election Campaign Fund for use in the next election for statewide office in 2010.

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The public funds will be wired this week to the depository bank accounts of Patrick and Mihos. Because candidates for governor and lieutenant governor run as a team after the primary, the funds may also be used to benefit Patrick's and Mihos' running mates, Timothy Murray and John Sullivan.

The other two candidates for governor did not receive public funds. Republican Kerry Healey opted not to participate in the program, while Grace Ross of the Green/Rainbow political designation had signified her intention to observe the statutory spending limits but did not submit a request for matching funds.

Patrick and Mihos had originally agreed to the statutory spending limit of \$1.5 million for the general election, but that figure was increased to the \$15 million self-imposed limit set by Healey, who was required to set a spending ceiling because she is opposed by at least one public financing participant. The general campaign spending limits, which apply to all the governor/lieutenant governor candidate teams, apply from Sept. 20 through Election Day, Nov. 7.

More information on the public financing program may be found at OCPF's website at www.mass.gov/ocpf/homepage_pubfin.htm.

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