

HOUSE BILL No. 4290

February 26, 2003, Introduced by Reps. Julian, Tabor, Vander Veen, Steil, Casperson, Shackleton, Brandenburg, Bisbee, Palmer and Hummel and referred to the Committee on Local Government and Urban Policy.

A bill to amend 1976 PA 388, entitled
"Michigan campaign finance act,"
(MCL 169.201 to 169.282) by adding section 65a.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 65a. (1) This section shall be known and may be cited
2 as the "candidate accountability law".

3 (2) A candidate who receives money from the state campaign
4 fund and whose name is eligible to appear on the primary election
5 ballot shall participate in the public debates required under
6 this subsection with all other candidates of the same party who
7 receive money from the state campaign fund and whose names are
8 eligible to appear on the primary election ballot, if any. A
9 public debate shall be scheduled in each calendar month beginning
10 in the month in which the names of more than 1 candidate of the
11 same party are eligible to appear on the primary election ballot

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1 and ending in the month immediately before the month in which the
2 primary election is held. Each public debate shall be held in a
3 different geographic region of this state. The candidates
4 participating in a public debate under this subsection, upon
5 mutual agreement, shall designate the geographic regions in which
6 the public debates will be held. If the candidates are unable to
7 agree upon the geographic regions, the secretary of state shall
8 designate the geographic regions for the public debates.

9 (3) A candidate who receives money from the state campaign
10 fund and whose name is eligible to appear on the general election
11 ballot shall participate in the public debates required under
12 this subsection with all other candidates who receive money from
13 the state campaign fund and whose names are eligible to appear on
14 the general election ballot, if any. A public debate shall be
15 held in each media market of this state during the period
16 beginning in the month in which the names of more than
17 1 candidate are eligible to appear on the general election ballot
18 and ending in the month immediately before the month in which the
19 general election is held. As used in this subsection, "media
20 market" means all of the following:

- 21 (a) The market area served by Detroit media.
- 22 (b) The market area served by Flint media.
- 23 (c) The market area served by Traverse City media.
- 24 (d) The market area served by Grand Rapids media.
- 25 (e) The market area served by Lansing media.
- 26 (f) The market area served by Alpena media.
- 27 (g) The market area served by Marquette media.

1 (h) The market area served by media covering southwest
2 Michigan.

3 (4) A public debate held under this section shall be
4 scheduled upon mutual agreement between all candidates required
5 to participate. If the candidates are unable to agree upon a
6 schedule of public debates, the secretary of state, after
7 reasonable consideration of the candidates' schedules, shall
8 establish a public debate schedule.

9 (5) A public debate held under this section shall be held
10 under the following circumstances:

11 (a) A moderator shall be present and shall be a neutral
12 party. The candidates participating in a public debate under
13 this section, upon mutual agreement, shall designate a moderator
14 for the public debate. If the candidates are unable to agree
15 upon a moderator, the secretary of state shall designate a
16 moderator for the public debate.

17 (b) Each candidate shall have equal opportunity to ask any
18 other candidate a question. The responding candidate shall have
19 2 minutes to respond to the question, and the candidate who asked
20 the question shall have 1 minute to rebut that response.

21 (c) Each candidate shall be positioned behind a podium.

22 (6) A candidate who does not participate in a public debate
23 required under this section shall return the amount received from
24 the state campaign fund for that election. However, a candidate
25 who is not able to participate in a public debate because he or
26 she is physically or mentally unfit or because of other exigent
27 circumstances that are mutually agreed to by all candidates is

1 not required to return the money received from the state campaign
2 fund.