



Replay of the Day

LISTEN LIVE

Program may not curb disparity in campaign spending

Associated Press Saturday, June 09, 2018



Credit: Angela Rowlings

Gov. Charlie Baker. Staff photo by Angela Rowlings.

Facebook Twitter Google+ Reddit 1 COMMENTS

BOSTON — The race for governor is shaping up to be the most lopsided in Massachusetts history when it comes to campaign war chests — and a state program aimed at rewarding candidates who volunteer to rein in spending isn't likely to make much a dent in the disparity.

Elections officials this week announced that nine Massachusetts candidates running for statewide office have opted to participate in the state's public financing program.

HERALD COL



TRENDING N

Boston has the ' according to stu

Thiessen: Obam

U.S. mayors join Resistance'

Johnny "Pie" Mcl and right winger and fan favorite

Tweets by @



Democratic lawma public records bhr



Embed

RELATED ARTICLES



'Red flag' bill clears Senate hurdle



Editorial: Sex offenders need full scrutiny



Records show nearly one-third of those civilly committed OK'd to go home

They include the two Democratic gubernatorial candidates, Jay Gonzalez and Bob Massie, and Republican gubernatorial hopeful Scott Lively, all of whom agreed to campaign spending limits.

Specifically, the three agreed to limit their campaign spending to \$1.5 million for the primary and \$1.5 million for the general election. In return, each candidate is eligible for up to \$750,000 for each of the two campaign periods, if funds are available.

While that may sound like a sizeable chunk, it's nowhere near the more than \$8 million and counting that Republican Gov. Charlie Baker has already stockpiled as of the end of May. Baker has opted not to participate in the program.

Also not participating is Baker's second in command, Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito, who has about \$3.6 million in her account, bringing the combined Baker-Polito total — assuming Baker fends off a long-shot primary challenge from Lively — to more than \$11.6 million in cash on hand with the general election more than five months off.

In contrast, Gonzalez, who recently won his party's endorsement, has about \$172,000 in cash in his campaign account, compared to Massie with about \$24,000 and Lively with about \$13,000.

While the amount of money in the State Election Campaign Fund that will be available to participating candidates will be determined in early July, officials from the state Office of Campaign and Political Finance estimates that the amount of available funds will top out at about \$1.2 million to be divided evenly between the primary and general election campaigns.

That means that if the three candidates for governor who are participating in the public financing system — Gonzalez, Massie and Lively — reach a minimum threshold of \$75,000 in qualifying matching contributions for the primary, there won't be any money available for other statewide candidates in the primary.

On Thursday, Baker declared he would spend no more than \$9 million in the primary, as required by the public financing law. Under the law, the \$9 million cap now also applies to Lively.

The two Democrats running for lieutenant governor, Quentin Palfrey and Jimmy Tingle, also have relatively small campaign accounts. Palfrey had about \$70,000 in his account as of the end of May. Tingle had about \$11,000.

Democratic candidates have also opted not to abide by the self-imposed spending limits, including Attorney General Maura Healey, who has nearly \$2 million in her campaign account.

HERALD COL



TRENDING N

Boston has the ' according to stu

Thiessen: Obam

U.S. mayors join Resistance'

Johnny "Pie" Mcl and right winger and fan favorite

Tweets by @



Democratic lawme public records bhr



Embed

That total is well ahead of her Republican challengers, Jay McMahon, with about \$4,000, and Dan Shores, with about \$3,500.

Other Democratic incumbents not agreeing to spending limits include Treasurer Deborah Goldberg and state Secretary William Galvin. The only Democratic incumbent to agree to the limits is Auditor Suzanne Bump.

Candidates who opt not to participate must state how much they expect to spend — and those participating will automatically have their limit raised to the same estimate.

The estimated \$1.2 million available this year is close to the more than \$1 million that was distributed to three candidates running for statewide office in 2014.

In the primary that year, \$617,952 was distributed to two candidates, both for governor. In the general election, \$447,752 was distributed to two candidates, both for governor.

Baker also opted not to participate in the program in 2014.

That year Baker set a self-imposed spending limit of \$5 million in the primary and \$8 million for the general election (which also included spending by Polito).

Public financing for campaigns has been in place for every statewide election since 1978. The sole source of funding is the State Election Campaign Fund, which allows taxpayers to direct \$1 from their tax liability on their annual income tax returns to the fund.

The largest outlay of public financing was in 2002, when almost \$4.1 million was distributed during the Clean Elections program, which was later rolled back.

During the life of the program, which began in 1978 with the goal of limiting the influence of money in state politics, a total of 109 candidates have received public funds.

On Thursday, Baker declared he would spend no more than \$9 million in the primary, as required by the public financing law. Under the law, the \$9 million cap now also applies to Lively.

.

More On: Bob Massie Charlie Baker William F. Galvin

SHARE THIS ARTICLE

33

SPONSORED CONTENT

Recommended by

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

HERALD COL



TRENDING N

Boston has the ' according to stu

Thiessen: Obam

U.S. mayors join Resistance'

Johnny "Pie" McI and right winger and fan favorite

Tweets by @

 **Boston H**
@bostonh
Democratic lawm
public records bhr



Embed