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Proposal 6:
POST THE FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS OF ALL CANDIDATES FOR STATE AND LEGISLATIVE OFFICES

ISSUE

Currently, the financial disclosure statements of only incumbent candidates for state and legislative office are posted on the Commission's website.

Public Officers Law §73-a(2) requires every candidate for statewide elected office or the legislature to file an annual financial disclosure statement; however, the statute makes no provision for making the statements of non-incumbent candidates available to the public. Accordingly, members of the public who wish to review candidates' financial disclosure statements must submit a request for production of the document, which can be cumbersome to process since there are over 200 seats in the legislature and, potentially, hundreds of candidates.

Current law authorizes the annual financial disclosure statements of sitting statewide elected officials and members of the legislature are posted on the website of the Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government. Therefore, the financial disclosure statements of incumbent candidates are already easily publicly available.

SOLUTION

Amend the Public Officers Law to allow the posting of financial disclosure statements of all statewide and legislative candidates on the Commission's website.

Starting in 2024, this proposal will permit the Commission to post the financial disclosure statements of all candidates for elective state office – both incumbents and non-incumbents – in primary and general elections. It will, as well, promote the interest of transparency and openness in state government.

Please note, draft bill language is available upon request.