



OFFICE OF
STATE TREASURER
DENISE L. NAPPIER

NEWS

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NAPPIER RENEWS CALL FOR COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Says "Days of Political Favoritism" Should End Permanently in Every Aspect of State Government

(Hartford) – State Treasurer Denise L. Nappier today renewed her call for comprehensive campaign finance reform, saying that "a quid pro quo, where campaign contributions can buy government business" must be "prohibited permanently in every aspect of state government."

"We must, once and for all, separate from the electoral process the opportunity for money to influence government contracts and policy," Nappier said at a news conference in her office. "As Treasurer, I am taking steps to make sure that doesn't happen in this office. The days of doing business based on political favoritism are over. But that's only a beginning."

Nappier, who testified in support of a comprehensive campaign finance reform plan before the 1999 General Assembly, said "the best way to achieve that goal is with comprehensive campaign finance reform and public financing that eliminates massive private contributions and their potential for corruption from our political process."

"Whether the business sought or received by a campaign contributor is with the Treasurer's office or any other agency of government, it is wrong and we must end that practice completely," Nappier stressed.

Nappier said that a law passed a few years ago by the General Assembly which prohibited the receipt of campaign contributions from anyone providing or intending to provide investment services to the State Treasury didn't go far enough.

"I'm sure it was passed with the best of intentions, but it's obvious now that it didn't solve the problem it set out to fix. As the recent revelations have demonstrated, a partial fix is no fix at all. The money banned from a Treasurer candidate's campaign had no

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trouble finding its way to other campaigns, and, as admitted in the recent guilty pleas, back to the former Treasurer's campaign as well."

Nappier was joined at the news conference advocating campaign finance reform by Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz and State Comptroller Nancy Wyman. The constitutional officers said they planned to work together and with legislative leaders to ensure the passage of a comprehensive campaign finance reform plan during the 2000 legislative session. Nappier said she has already begun meeting with legislative leaders, and is encouraged by the response she has received.

"We must open up the democratic electoral process by promoting a level playing field for all people seeking public office – regardless of their financial means. Campaign finance reform alone will not restore the broken trust, but I do believe it would go a long way in repairing the breach. Quite simply, now is the time, and the citizens of Connecticut deserve nothing less," Nappier said.

Nappier also praised the prompt action of the State Elections Enforcement Commission in opening a formal investigation into 1998 election campaign of former treasurer Paul Silvester. Nappier requested the investigation in a September 27 letter to the Commission as one of a series of steps she was initiating to ensure public confidence in the wake of former Treasurer Paul Silvester's pleading guilty to racketeering and money laundering charges.

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