



Legislation Summary:

An Act restoring financial transparency in presidential elections

Initial bill number: [S. 365](#) (Bill numbers will change as legislation proceeds.)

Sponsor: Sen. Michael Barrett

This bill would require candidates for president and vice president of the United States to disclose federal tax returns in order to be on the ballot in Massachusetts. There are three provisions:

1. Candidates or potential candidates for president must submit federal income tax returns for the three most recent available years and a statement of financial interests and written consent to disclose them to the Secretary of State in order to be on a presidential primary ballot.
2. Candidates for president and vice president must file federal income tax returns for the five most recent available years and a statement of financial interests and written consent to disclose them to the Secretary of State in order to be on the general election ballot.
3. Presidential electors are prohibited from voting for any person who fails to comply.

The bill also requires the Secretary of State to make those documents public by specified times before primary and general elections.

League position:

From Impact on Issues, p. 28:

“The League supports changes in the presidential election system – from the candidate selection process to the general election. We support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates and their positions, public policy issues and the selection process itself. The League supports action to ensure that the media, political parties, candidates, and all levels of government achieve these goals and provide that information.”

From Where We Stand, p. 14:

“Goal: Improved methods of financing political campaigns should ensure the public’s right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and allow maximum citizen participation in the political process.”