

Common Cause Massachusetts
2014 Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Scott Lively Office: Governor

1) Are you concerned about the amount of money in politics and what would you do to promote policies to limit its influence in elections and governing?

Yes, but I don't think there is any silver bullet to solve the problem of money in political campaigns. The wealthy always find a way to get around the rules, including the purchase of media organizations which subtly manipulate the voters through propaganda in the guise of news. The only real defense to such manipulation is an electorate possessed of good critical thinking skills, which unfortunately are no longer taught in our public schools.

One way to reduce the imbalance caused by money would be to expand the scope of the official Massachusetts voter guide to give candidates equal space for a final message to the voters in print, video and electronic formats, and concurrently to impose a moratorium on all print and broadcast political advertising for, say, five days before the election. The voters would get a respite from advertising bombardment and could better weigh the arguments as presented side by side and in balance in the voter guides.

Do you support public financing of elections? Please be specific about which offices it should cover and any other information about what kind of support should be provided.

I support the existing public financing option available in Massachusetts.

Do you support a constitutional amendment to allow the government to limit political spending and to clarify that corporations do not have the same rights as people? Why or why not.

Yes. The legal fiction that corporations are people has some utility in the business world, but granting these artificial persons equal rights in the political process alongside natural persons tends to degrade and corrupt the process.

2) What would you do to bring more transparency to government operations?

My first order of business as Governor would be to open all the books and all the processes of government to public scrutiny, and to establish citizen oversight panels to find and expose waste, fraud and abuse. I would create an interactive website to facilitate citizen networking in this task and assign full-time staff to maximize its reach and impact. I would concurrently assign attorneys to initiate prosecution of malefactors as they were exposed.

3) The legislature passed a terrific elections bill earlier this year that will make great steps towards modernizing our elections. Would you support Election Day registration for the commonwealth? Is there anything else you think we should do to improve our elections in Massachusetts?

No. Election day registration is a recipe for voter fraud. I would keep the current voter registration deadline and require voter identification at the polls. The biggest problem with the current voting process is not the election rules, it is voter apathy and disgust caused by the perception, largely correct, that most of the politicians in the two-party system are corrupt and nothing will really change by voting for one batch of crooks over the other.

4) What do you think should be done, if anything, about the issue of political patronage?

The only solution to political patronage is to elect a governor who uses a strict merit-based approach to appointments and hiring. I believe I am the only candidate in this field committed to doing that.