

Statement to the State Gov't Finance Conference Committee – 5-7-19



Chair Nelson, Chair Kiffmeyer, members, my name is George Beck. I am a retired administrative law judge, a former chair of the Minnesota Campaign Finance Board, and presently chair of Minnesota Citizens for Clean Elections, a non-partisan non-profit devoted to election and campaign finance reform.

Most Minnesotans support the election provisions in HF 1935.

The ranked choice voting bill (HF 983) merely authorizes cities without a city charter to consider adopting ranked choice voting, as Minneapolis, St. Paul, and St. Louis Park have chosen to do. It permits local control of elections.

HF 40 provides for voting rights for paroled felons or those on probation. These individuals have already paid their debt to society. That is why 16 states already permit them to vote.

HF 2050 closes the loophole in our disclosure law that allows dark money, including out-of-state and foreign money, to support candidates without the public knowing the identity of the contributors. Full disclosure was seen as necessary by the *Citizens United* court, and is supported by some 80% of Americans.

A Redistricting Advisory Commission is established by HF 1605 to assist the legislature with its difficult conflict of interest problem in drawing election maps after the census. It will allow us avoid gerrymandering on behalf of either party.

The National Popular Vote Compact bill, if adopted by sufficient states, will permit election of the President to be decided by a majority of the popular vote. HF 1941.

Inclusion of these provisions will restore Minnesota's position as a leader in our country in election reform. Several other states have already adopted these measures. They ensure a full-fledged democracy.

Minnesotans need to know if their representatives are voting for them or their political party. Please vote with the majority of Minnesotans. Thank you.