

Debate Criteria and Vetting Standards

For U.S. Senate, U.S. Congressional District, and CT Constitutional Office Debates

Adopted March 9, 2010; ratified March 13, 2012

The overall coordination for any debate or forum involving candidates or potential candidates for statewide office is the responsibility of the LWVCT Ed Fund. This includes candidates for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, Treasurer, Comptroller, Attorney General, and U.S. Senator. If a local League or a group of local Leagues wants to hold a debate/forum for candidates for statewide office, they must receive approval from the State Board and meet the following criteria:

- have commitments from all qualified candidates per the current revision of the LWVCTEF Criteria to Determine Candidate Eligibility.
- have use of an adequate facility at minimal or no cost
- have funding to cover expenses (e.g., from a co-sponsor)
- be able to provide television coverage, either live or taped
- maintain control over the form and rules according to LWVCT guidelines.

Please note: criteria for televised in-studio debates with no audience are different. Please contact the LWVCT office if you are arranging such a debate or forum.

1. Ballot access

All candidates who have achieved ballot access in accordance with Connecticut election statutes will be considered.

2. Evidence of campaign being waged (current information to be provided not later than the 7th day after the primary date or the date of ballot access, whichever is later)

- a. candidate's availability to the public as evidenced by, e.g.,:
 - HQ open to the public during business hours (9:00-5:00 or as otherwise publicized), location publicized
 - campaign phone (cell or land line) and e-mail address, publicized
 - dedicated candidate-specific website or web page
 - actual and planned in-district campaign appearances including appearances at community functions, coffee-type meetings, mall visits, etc.
 - publications, including platform
 - yard signs (where permitted)
 - distribution of campaign literature
- b. volunteers and/or paid staff, including a campaign manager (provide contact information)
- c. campaign treasurer (provide contact information)
- d. campaign spending to date

3. Evidence of financial support (current information to be provided not later than the 7th day after the primary date or the date of ballot access, whichever is later)

- for gubernatorial or US Senate candidates, campaign contributions of at least \$50,000, of which at least 1/3 is raised in-state

- for US Congressional candidates, contributions of at least \$15,000, of which 1/3 is raised in-district
- The total contributions received will be verified via candidate response, via state filings with the SOTS/SEEC and via other public sources such as Open Secrets and the National Institute of Money in State Politics (Top National Donors Project).

The vetting committee will consist of the LWVCTEF President, VP for Voter Services and the LWVCTEF board-appointed liaisons to the US Congress debates.