

Secretary of the State

SUSAN BYSIEWICZ



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

TIE PRIMARIES NO LONGER DECIDED BY COIN FLIP

You wouldn't flip a coin to determine the winner of the Super Bowl if it was tied at the end of four quarters. So why did Connecticut use a coin flip to determine the winner of a primary? With the passage of An Act Concerning the Integrity and Security of the Voting Process, no primary for state, district, or municipal office that ends in a tie will ever again be decided by the flip of a coin.

I joined State Rep. Elissa Wright in proposing legislation after the 2006 Democratic primary for the 41st Assembly District (Groton) – in which Ms. Wright was a candidate – ended with a tie vote. Ms. Wright ultimately won the primary because she won the coin-toss. If our proposal had been law at the time, voters in Connecticut's 41st Assembly District primary would have had another chance to have their voice heard – in a special primary three weeks later. Connecticut law already prohibited a general election which ended in a tie from being resolved by lot – or luck – but a different standard existed for primaries.

Connecticut is known for its close elections – a few years ago a candidate for the General Assembly won by just one vote – so it makes sense to change the law. No candidate should have to worry that a tie would mean a coin-flip, and more importantly no voter should fear being disenfranchised. All elections, no matter what the outcome, should be in the hands of the voters.

NUMBER OF BUSINESS STARTS ON RECORD PACE

I am pleased to report that 16,612 new businesses filed with my office's Commercial Recording Division in the first half of 2007, the most for the first six months of any year since at least 1999.

The total for the first half of June also represents a 5% increase – or 750 additional business starts - compared to the same time last year. Nearly 90% of the increase is due to an increase in the number of limited liability companies. LLC's are most often small businesses which employ fewer than 50 people.

The statistics show us that entrepreneurs are making their move in Connecticut and we know from experience that this translates into job growth. More than 80% of new jobs in this state come from small businesses so an increase in LLCs is encouraging.

Despite this positive news, the number of business stops for the first half of 2007 reached 5,116 – approximately a 10% increase from the first six months of 2006. Connecticut is taking two steps forward and one step back. While new businesses are sprouting up, others are wilting due in part to skyrocketing energy and health care costs. My office regularly holds small business show-cases and roundtables across the state and we consistently hear that the cost of doing business is too high in Connecticut.

Sincerely,

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Registrars of Voters no longer need to carry these to determine winners of tied primaries.

CT's Close Elections

- 2006 41st Assembly District primary tie vote of 457-457.
- 2002 65th Assembly District race margin of victory of 1 vote
- 1994 2nd Congressional District race margin of victory of 21 votes
- 2006 2nd Congressional District race margin of victory of 83 votes.

SOTS Trivia Corner

What year was Governor Ella Grasso first elected Secretary of the State of Connecticut?

Check back next week for the answer.

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