



## **Comment to the State Board of Elections on Proposed Regulations For Public Campaign Finance Program, Part 6221**

November 2, 2025

Reinvent Albany writes to comment on [the new regulations](#) proposed by the Public Campaign Finance Board (PCFB) in response to recent changes made by the Legislature and Governor.

Reinvent Albany [strongly opposed](#) the self-serving changes pushed by the Legislature in the FY 2026 budget. The bill was written so quickly that some lawmakers seemed uncertain of what they were even voting for. While state leaders did make some improvements to the public matching program (such as moving up payout dates and adding a severability clause), on the whole, the changes undermined the program and diluted the impact of small donors in New York State elections. A CEO for a company contracting with New York State can now donate \$1,050 to a candidate for State Senate and receive a \$2,000 match on that contribution. We do not see how \$1,050 is a “small donation.”

We do not envy the PCFB having to write regulations in response to a hastily and poorly drafted law. That said, we urge the PCFB to clarify when contributions are matchable. We believe that the regulations as written, in two parts, will continue to confuse campaigns and the members of the public.

The PCFB proposes the following language:

### ***Section 6221.11***

***The first two hundred fifty dollars of any contribution or contributions totaling up to a maximum of one thousand fifty dollars in the aggregate in the election cycle to a candidate or candidate's committee shall be considered a matchable contribution, provided that such contribution is otherwise determined to be valid for public matching funds by the PCFB;***

provided, however, that only the portion of any such contribution which is in excess of two hundred fifty dollars in the aggregate obtained on or before the date of the primary election shall not be deemed matchable for the primary election if applicable; and provided, however, that for aggregate contributions in excess of two hundred fifty dollars obtained on or before the date of the primary election, if applicable, shall be deemed matchable for general election [...]

#### **Section 6221.20**

(g) ~~No portion of any contributions exceeding \$250 in the aggregate shall be matched;~~ The first two hundred fifty dollars of any contribution or contributions totaling up to a maximum of one thousand fifty dollars in the aggregate in the election cycle to a candidate or candidate's committee shall be considered a matchable contribution provided that such contribution is otherwise determined to be valid for public matching funds by the PCFB; provided, however, that only the portion of any such contribution which is in excess of two hundred fifty dollars in the aggregate obtained on or before the date of the primary election shall not be deemed matchable for the primary election, if applicable; and provided, further, that for aggregate contributions in excess of two hundred fifty dollars obtained on or before the date of the primary election, if applicable, may be deemed matchable for general election purposes for the amount above two hundred fifty dollars after the date of the primary election. Any contributions totaling over one thousand fifty dollars in the aggregate in the election cycle shall not be matchable in any amount and any portion of the contribution that had been previously matched shall be returned to the PCFB; provided, however, that a campaign may keep such matched funds, and may make a claim for any contribution under the ~~\$250~~\$1050 threshold if the overage is returned within 7 business days of receipt of notice from the PCFB.

Our understanding is that this means aggregate contributions of more than \$1,050 in an election cycle cannot be matched. But the implications for a donor receiving a match twice in an election cycle are still unclear. We support the Brennan Center's recommendations for the following clarifications to the PCFB's proposed language:

**Section 6221.11(e):**

The first \$250 of any contribution or contributions per each covered election from a donor whose contributions totaling up to a maximum of \$1050 in the aggregate in the election cycle to a candidate or candidate's committee shall be considered a matchable contribution, provided that such contribution is otherwise determined to be valid for public matching funds by the PCFB; provided, however, that only the portion of any such contribution which is in excess of \$250 in the aggregate obtained on or before the date of the primary election shall not be deemed matchable for the primary election if applicable; and provided, however, that for candidates who participate in the public campaign finance program during the primary election in a covered cycle, aggregate contributions in excess of \$250 obtained on or before the date of the primary election, if applicable, shall be deemed matchable for general election purposes for the amount above the first \$250 matchable contribution for the primary election, up to the second \$250 matchable contribution for the general election in that cycle. Said excess shall only be matchable after the date of the primary election; and provided further, that any contributions totaling over \$1050 in the aggregate in the election cycle shall not be matchable in any amount. For candidates who participate in the public campaign finance program during the general election without having participated in the public campaign finance program in a primary election during the same cycle, only the first \$250 of any contribution or contributions in the aggregate during that cycle shall be deemed matchable.

**Section 6221.20(g):**

The first \$250 of any contribution or contributions per each covered election from a donor whose contributions totaling up to a maximum of \$1050 in the aggregate in the election cycle to a candidate or candidate's committee shall be considered a matchable contribution provided that such contribution is otherwise determined to be valid for public matching funds by the PCFB; provided, however, that only the portion of any such contribution which is in excess of \$250 in the aggregate obtained on or before the date of the primary election shall not be deemed matchable for the primary election, if applicable; and provided, further, that for candidates who participate in the public campaign finance program during the primary election in a covered cycle, aggregate contributions in excess of \$250 obtained on or before the date of the primary election, if applicable, may be deemed matchable for general election purposes for the amount above the first \$250 matchable contribution for the primary election, up to the second \$250

**matchable contribution for the general election in that cycle. Said excess shall only be matchable** after the date of the primary election. **For candidates who participate in the public campaign finance program during the general election without having participated in the public campaign finance program in a primary election during the same cycle, only the first \$250 of any contribution or contributions in the aggregate during that cycle shall be deemed matchable.** Any contributions totaling over \$1050 in the aggregate in the election cycle shall not be matchable in any amount and any portion of the contribution that had been previously matched shall be returned to the PCFB; provided, however, that a campaign may keep such matched funds, and may make a claim for any contribution under the \$1050 threshold if the overage is returned within 7 business days of receipt of notice from the PCFB.

We also urge the PCFB to provide use cases for the changes in language. If someone donates \$250 to a candidate in the primary election, then donates another \$1,000 to the candidate in the next election, what happens? Examples would clarify the PCFB's intent for both candidates and the public.

We appreciate the Board's responsiveness and dedication to the program. Please contact Tom Speaker, Legislative Director, at [tom@reinventalbany.org](mailto:tom@reinventalbany.org) if you have any questions.