



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR RELEASE:

Immediately
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Frederick M. Herrmann, Executive Director of the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission, announced today that steps are being taken by the Commission to implement the new debate requirement provision contained in the recently enacted public financing legislation signed by Governor Thomas H. Kean on January 21, 1989.

Participation in two primary and two general election debates is now required as a condition of each candidates's receipt of public matching funds. No other state in the nation has such a provision in its public financing law.

At its meeting in January, Herrmann explained, the Commission discussed procedures for selection of private organizations to sponsor the four gubernatorial primary election debates required by the new public financing provisions of the Campaign Contributions and Expenditures Reporting Act.

Herrmann said the Commission must select the primary election debate sponsors by April 14, 1989. In order to be considered to sponsor one or more of the primary or general election debates, a private organization must not be affiliated with any political party or with any holder of or candidate for public office, must not have endorsed any candidate in the pending primary or general election for Governor, and must have previously sponsored one or more televised debates for statewide office in New Jersey since 1976.

Herrmann further explained that the deadline for submitting applications to ELEC to sponsor primary election debates is March 15, 1989 and that the general election debate sponsorship deadline is July 1, 1989. According to the new law, the four primary election debates must occur between April 19 and May 26, 1989 unless the candidates agree to an emergency postponement of the second debate deadline. The two general election debates must occur between September 19 and October 27, 1989, unless an emergency postponement of the second debate deadline is declared. If an emergency requiring postponement is declared by the candidates, the second debate must occur no later than the second day before each election.

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Representatives of organizations which meet the sponsorship criteria and wish to be considered to sponsor one or more of the 1989 debates are invited to contact the Commission for further information, Herrmann announced.

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