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House of Commons  
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## Press Release

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### Election laws must change says Casey

**August 2, 2007**

**Ottawa** – When M.P. Bill Casey was expelled from caucus for voting against the budget that broke the Atlantic Accord agreements the Conservative Party gained a strong advantage over Casey in the next election if Casey runs as an independent.

Elections Canada has confirmed that M.P. Bill Casey cannot raise funds to conduct the next election in a similar manner to his competition in the Conservative Party of Canada or the Candidates for any other party in his riding.

Below are three specifics:

- **Party sponsored candidates** can raise tax deductible contributions at any time through their riding associations and issue tax receipts. **Independents** can only raise tax deductible contributions after the election is called and the candidate is confirmed.

This means that Party candidates can raise tax deductible funds through their riding associations over several years between elections but independents can only raise tax deductible funds for approximately fifty days....and in the middle of an election. “Hardly a level playing field,” said the M.P.

- **Party sponsored candidates** and their riding associations can accept contributions of \$1,100 per contributor each year, while **independents** can accept that amount only once each election period.

Over a five-year term, a contributor can give a maximum of \$5,500 to a Party candidate through their riding association, but only \$1,100 to an independent for the same time period.

- **Party sponsored candidates** must turn over unused campaign funds to their riding association, or to their party and can get these funds back for the next election, but an **independent** must give their surplus funds to the Receiver General of Canada and cannot ever get them back.

Casey says this is clearly an undemocratic double-standard to provide some candidates with a huge funding advantage over others. Voters are disenfranchised because they cannot provide the financial assistance to an independent candidate that they wish to support. Meanwhile, supporters of Party sponsored candidates can contribute to their candidate.

This situation gives party leaders a tool to influence their Members of Parliament to vote for a party line, because if the M.P. is expelled, the ability to raise funds against competitors in the next election is significantly reduced. As a result, a Member’s ability to raise election funding is cut dramatically.

In September, Casey will be bringing forth a Private Members Bill to correct the situation of two classes of candidates to give all Members exactly the same ability to raise election funds. Casey will be seeking the support of all parties for his bill.

For further information:

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