

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SUNLIGHT SHINES ON CAMPAIGN DONATIONS MACOMB COUNTY POST REPORTS ON INTERNET

Mount Clemens, MI – Candidates appearing on the August 3 Primary Election ballot must file campaign finance reports by 5pm on Friday. For the first time, voters will be able to see those reports on the Internet thanks to Macomb County Clerk / Register of Deeds Carmella Sabaugh and the county Board of Commissioners. After the filing deadline, Sabaugh's web site will give voters easy access to every political candidate's finances in the 2004 election cycle.

Sabaugh's web site will offer page-by-page access to local candidates' campaign finance reports, which show each contribution received and each expense paid. Macomb County is believed to be the second and largest county in Michigan to provide such open access to county and local campaign finance reports.

"Disclosing campaign finance information this way will place Macomb County among the most accountable to the public of all counties in the state," said

Macomb County Clerk – Register of Deeds Carmella Sabaugh. “People have the right to know where their officials get campaign money and I’m happy to make it easier for the average person to find out.”

“Let the sunshine in for all to know who’s funding whose campaign,” said Macomb County Commissioner Michael Sessa, a Harrison Township Republican.

“It’s always a good day when government is more transparent and citizens have the opportunity to conveniently view information from their homes,” said Macomb County Board of Commissioners Chairwoman Nancy White.

“Once again Macomb County is a leader in giving easy access to public records,” said Joyce Fitch, “Voters make better choices when they can see the facts for themselves and there is nothing like being able to track the source of money used to finance campaigns.”

“This service is county government at its best,” said Rich Robinson, Executive Director of the Michigan Campaign Finance Network, a Lansing-based nonpartisan campaign finance watchdog organization. “Voters throughout Macomb County can easily see who is supporting whom for public office, and make their own conclusions about the significance of that support. Every county in Michigan should follow Macomb’s lead and implement a system like this one.”

Members of the public will be able to get from home all of the information that used to require a trip to the clerk’s office. A person will be able to view and print campaign finance reports anonymously from any computer connected to the Internet. Campaign finance reports will still be available for review in County Clerk Carmella Sabaugh’s office.

Candidates who do not expect to spend or receive over \$1,000 for an election may request a reporting waiver. Once they have the waiver, and as long as it is maintained, they are not required to file campaign finance statements.

In the future, Sabaugh will add the ability to enter an individual's name and get a list of every candidate to whom that person donated, including the amount and date of the donation.

“Campaign finance information does not belong to the candidates, it belongs to the people of Macomb County,” said Sabaugh. “This system will shed sunlight on county campaign finances and enable people to follow the money.”

Campaign finance reports may be accessed starting Friday at 5:01 pm on the Internet at <http://www.macombcountymi.gov/clerksoffice>.

This is another a long list of accomplishments for County Clerk Carmella Sabaugh. As Macomb County Clerk – Register of Deeds, Sabaugh was the first county clerk in Michigan to:

- Provide evening hours making sure people can get personal service if they cannot leave work to visit the clerk's office during the day.
- Offer a mobile branch office bringing clerk's services to local communities.
- Provide free bus service to people summoned for jury duty.
- Provide overnight delivery service for birth certificate requests and other vital records.
- Use computerized scanning for the register of deeds.
- Accept credit card payment for court filings and vital records.
- Launch a toll-free 24-hour fax-on-demand system to provide forms and information.
- Provide assumed name business registrations and death records on the Internet.
- Start a Personal Protection Order Assistance Center to help victims of abuse.
- Enable the public to initiate an automatic phone call from the clerk's web site.