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Don Bulluck 40° 

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Public campaign financing will be missed

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

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North Carolina legislators last year went about trying to fix a problem that didn't exist when they eliminated public financing for state judicial elections.

It's hard to figure out whom the lawmakers were trying to help. Certainly not Democratic judges, who embraced the idea of public financing early on. And not Republican jurists either. GOP candidates for the bench bought into the public financing plan just as eagerly.

Former governors Jim Holshouser and Jim Martin, both Republicans, wrote newspaper columns in an effort to persuade GOP lawmakers to keep the system intact. Alas, to no avail.

The public financing plan leveled the playing field for judicial candidates. And it helped contain campaign spending, too. The public financing plan provided qualifying candidates for the Supreme Court with \$240,000 and less than \$200,000 for candidates for the N.C. Court of Appeals.

To put that in contrast, Supreme Court Justice Mark Martin collected almost \$188,000 on his own in 2013 for his campaign to become chief justice. That almost certainly will increase as the campaign season begins in earnest later this year.

The public will be bombarded by campaign ads between now and November, particularly in the heated U.S. Senate race. Public financing for judicial contests offered a bit of sensibility in the face of mudslinging. Now, it appears, that breath of sanity is gone as well.

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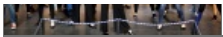
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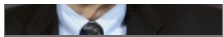


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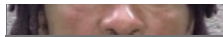
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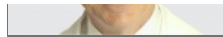
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ONLY ONE MAJOR PROBLEM TO FIX

Submitted by [deros](#) on February 26, 2014 - 6:33am.

The only major problem we now need to "fix" is to remove the extremists now in control of our legislature by voting them out.

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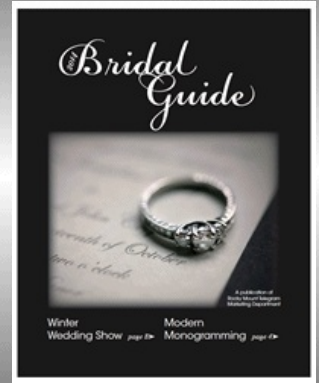
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