

**Promoting Civility in Political Campaigns: Will Campaigners Ever Leave the  
“Gloves” On?**

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uncivil political debate adversely affects political trust within the public and subsequently the entire political process. Lau and Pomper (2000);







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restraints created during a campaign. In 2006, the program was recommended for continuation with twenty-two further stipulations that included adding more voting districts to the scope of the program.

Recently a U.S. District Court ruled that Arizona's provision of public campaign financing is a violation of free speech and therefore unconstitutional (Christie, 2008a; Christie 2008b; Fischer 2008; *McComish v. Brewer* 2008). The reason that the act was ruled to be a violation of free speech was because the act provided additional funds, "rescue funds", to enrolled candidates so that they could respond to attack ads by independent groups (The Press of Atlantic City, 2008). Moreover, the act places indirect caps on the spending of candidates, which has been ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court (*McComish v. Brewer* 2008). Due to this ruling, New Jersey has suspended its clean elections financing program for the time being due to its similarities with Arizona's program (Ryan, 2008). However, for enrolled candidates in Arizona the judge that made the ruling, U.S. District Judge Roslyn Silvers, has decided to hold off on filing an injunction that would keep enrolled candidates so late in the election season from receiving financial support. According to Silvers, filing an injunction would place those candidates enrolled in the program at a severe disadvantage to private candidates who have the financial resources that are not dependent on the public system (Christie, 2008b).

### ***Recommendations for Increasing Civility in Politics***

There are a number of ways in which civility can be promoted in political campaigns, but creating a viable mechanism for encouraging change requires the support of a number of actors. Without the support of public stakeholders in addition to the politicians who would utilize more civil tactics, recommendations on any level would be overlooked. It is through the support of the media, general public, politicians, and political pa







ethical in matters of public concern. The difference between normal watchdog groups and the type being proposed here is that watchdog groups actively observing campaigns could not be

***Conclusion***





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