ALBANY, NY--(4/14/98) The State Board of Elections announced today that of the 2,423 filers required to file campaign finance statements with the board during 1997, 2334 did so. That is a compliance rate of 96%. "We are extremely gratified with the high level of compliance with the state board's regulations and to have only 89 reports not filed at the end of the process is a real accomplishment", said Executive Director, Thomas R. Wilkey.

In 1997, the board sent reminder letters to 428 late filers which resulted in 249 additional filings. The board then sent the remaining delinquent filers show cause orders which resulted in 90 more filings. Fines were assesed and judgements taken against the remaining 89 and were sent to the local district attorney for prosecution.

"With all statewide and legislative offices up for election this year, the number of required filings could approach 5,500. This proven system to encourage compliance becomes even more meaningful", said Wilkey. "And this process will become easier and faster when electronic filing begins in mid 1999", he said.

Since electronic filing is still a year away, all reports are submitted on paper forms provided by the board. Every year, board personnel conduct seminars to familiarize new candidates and committee treasurers with filing regulations. The board publishes various booklets and pamphlets outlining the rules as well.

Despite the training and guidance, some do not file in a timely manner. So the board has instituted a procedure designed to remind the slow filers to comply. Within ten days of the date the statement is due, the board sends a notice to the filers reminding them to file. If that notice is ignored, the board will institute, on or about the 20th day after the due date, legal proceedings seeking a court order that compels compliance and requires payment of a $500 fine. If this action fails, the board will refer the matter to the district attorney. Monetary judgements are enforced by the board thru a variety of methods, including liens and the use of independent collection agents.