



House Committee on Rules  
Re: HB 4076, Small Donor Elections

February 8, 2018

Chair Williamson and fellow committee members,  
Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of the passage of small donor elections program. My name is Jenny Lee, and I am the Advocacy Director at the Coalition of Communities of Color, a coalition of 19 culturally-specific organizations dedicated to cross-cultural, collective action for racial equity. The Coalition of Communities of Color's mission is to address the socioeconomic disparities, institutional racism, and inequity of services experienced by our families, children and communities; and to organize our communities for collective action resulting in social change to obtain self-determination, wellness, justice and prosperity.

The Coalition of Communities of Color is committed to a democracy with equitable representation of all of Oregon's people, including our state's diverse communities of color. We believe that a small donor election program is a much-needed tool to ensure that every voice is heard in our government. Our democracy is strongest when everyone has a voice and there is equitable representation of communities of color, immigrants, and refugees. As Oregon becomes increasingly diverse, we must ensure that we are hearing the priorities and solutions brought forward by these communities. Reducing the power of money in politics will help bring these leaders and policy solutions forward, building a stronger Oregon for all of us.

Communities of color, immigrants, and refugees are some of those most impacted by structural barriers to building wealth. As a result, they are some of those most impacted by the money needed to run for office and influence candidates. Small donor elections will empower a diverse pool of talented candidates to run for office, regardless of their connections to wealthy donors. And when candidates are relieved from the pressure of pursuing large contributions, they can focus on connecting with all voters, including historically underrepresented and marginalized communities.

Communities of color have important solutions to offer that will build a stronger Oregon for all of us. On behalf of the Coalition of Communities of Color, I urge you to take action for more equitable representation of every Oregonian by establishing a small donor elections program.

Thank you,  
Jenny Lee  
On Behalf of the Coalition of Communities of Color

