

To: House Rules Committees
From: Kate Titus, Common Cause Oregon
Re: Campaign Finance Reform Package
HB 2714 –4 contribution limits
Date: May 23, 2019

Common Cause

Common Cause is a nonpartisan organization that works for open, honest, accountable government. We're more than one million Americans – including 25,000 Oregonians – working together to realize the unfinished promise of democracy.

Support for Campaign Finance Reform

Common Cause supports passage of a package of campaign finance reforms to limit, disclose, and reduce the influence of money in the political process.

The problem of money in politics is complex. It will take a comprehensive approach. Oregon needs an upper ceiling on campaign contributions like nearly every other state. At the same time, we need to raise the floor with a small donor matching program that makes small contributions meaningful and gives candidates supported by small contributions enough money to get their message out, even when there are independent expenditures. And though we can't currently limit independent spending, we can require full transparency. All these components are needed.

Most fundamentally, we express strong support for a referral to the ballot to amend the state constitution, clarifying our authority to regulate money in politics.

We also support HB2714 –4, the proposed system of contribution limits before you today. We encourage efforts to further strengthen this bill. Most significantly, we encourage adding a small donor election matching program component, in order to make the small contributions of ordinary constituents matter as much as that of any political donor. However, as is, we believe HB2714 –4 is an important step in the right direction.