

Hello and thank you to the committee for taking the time to read my testimony. My name is Amanda Smith, and I am a resident of the Brooklyn neighborhood in SE Portland.

I have lived in Oregon for 15 years and feel deeply committed to this place. I reside in Portland, but I have found a community of people who I care about who reside all over the state, work in all kinds of industry and have all kinds of political and personal beliefs. Oregon is diverse both in its nature and in its people. The reason why I care so much about meaningful campaign reform is because the effects of unlimited contributions and secret campaign expenditures significantly impacts the daily lives of the people who I share this beautiful place called home. It threatens the health of our democracy by limiting adequate representation in local decision-making. Not only that but it contributes to voter apathy and community disengagement because as a working-class person it feels impossible to go up against a wealthy donor class.

The thing I love most about being able to support this issue is that it really shouldn't matter what party affiliation you are. What matters most is making sure all Oregonians are represented and feel encouraged to participate from the fisherman in Bandon, to the ranchers in Monument, to the potato farmers in Madras, to the healthcare workers in Portland, to the students in Eugene. To my friends and family who face structural barriers to wealth, but who work very hard to contribute positively to the land and to their communities but who struggle to believe our elected officials work for us. The time to address this issue is now. I fear the longer we prolong it the harder it will be to manage. I understand our state is currently facing many crises from Covid to wildfire relief, from housing to food insecurity, but I sincerely believe that if we can make it easier for more folks to participate the more motivated and inspired minds will be at the table, ready to work to solve these issues and ready to work together.

This is why my preferred choice would be HB 3343. Overwhelming Oregonians support meaningful campaign finance reform but what we also really need is a Public Campaign Fund that can be used to match small contributions, stretching further what little I am able to give, and making it easier for politicians to prioritize the needs of their constituents, not their big donors.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Amanda Smith  
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