



May 13, 2021

Dear Chair Smith Warner, Vice-Chairs Drazen and Holvey, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon, we would like to share thoughts on HB 2680, with regard to the -1 amendments.

NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon considers access to a healthy democracy as one of our most important priorities. Our organization is dedicated to building and sustaining a movement that uses the political process to guarantee every individual the right to make personal decisions regarding the full range of reproductive choices, including preventing unintended pregnancy, raising healthy families, and choosing legal abortion.

We strongly believe that a person's bodily autonomy should not be up for debate on the ballot, and yet we must contend with an anti-choice opposition that while small in numbers in Oregon, is incredibly well-resourced. With our sister organization, NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon PAC, we are trusted by voters to endorse and support pro-choice candidates in each election. We work directly with candidates to fulfill our mission of cultivating leadership, and work with many who are running for office for the first time. In 2020, of the 70+ candidates we endorsed, 80 percent identified as women or gender non-binary, as Black, Indigenous, or other person of color (BIPOC), or as LGBTQ2IA+. After elections, we continue our partnership with elected leaders to enact equitable policies and practices, and ensure that reproductive health care access is centered in policy decisions.

Every few years a ballot measure that threatens access qualifies for the ballot, and it falls on NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon and our partners to mobilize thousands of voters, and do everything within our power to defend reproductive freedom. In 2018, we were part of a transformative coalition with ACLU-Oregon, APANO, Forward Together, Oregon Nurses Association, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon, SEIU, and Western States Center to defeat Measure 106, a ban on public funding of abortion care in Oregon. Our partners were intentional in efforts to engage communities that would have been most impacted by this ban; as a direct result, we defeated the abortion ban by the highest vote count in the 2018 election (and the highest vote count of a ballot measure campaign in state history).

Measure 106's resounding defeat would not have happened without the work of our BIPOC-led partners, who ensured that historically marginalized communities and the people who would be most impacted by an abortion ban, had a voice. If we want to enact equitable policies, we need to hear from voters that are too often ignored by mainstream campaigns. We believe voters should be engaged in their respective communities, in their language, and by trusted partners like Forward Together Action, APANO, and PCUN. These organizations provide an incredible service to their communities, and enacting overly simplistic campaign finance reforms that would limit their ability to participate in political campaigns, would be a disservice to the communities they represent.

We thank Rep. Rayfield and his staff for reaching to community-based C4 organizations to inform these discussions, and for the thoughtful approach they are taking to ensure that we do not undermine the ability for emerging organizations to continue to build power. These organizations are uniquely positioned and trusted by most-impacted communities, and without their ability to engage in political campaigns, we will lose important perspectives of voters that often face barriers to participating in our democracy. If we want to elect representative leadership that is ready to meet the challenges of dismantling systemic racism and inequities, campaign finance reform efforts must be rooted in racial justice. We welcome campaign finance reform as essential for a strong democracy, but we cannot unintentionally cut out Oregonians who have been the least represented in government. **We support the following elements of the -1 amendments:**

The definition of a membership organization that removes barriers to participation and promotes volunteerism to build stronger communities. Many organizations work in communities where few have the means to contribute, but whose members dedicate and donate their time. The organizational membership definition included in the -1 allows for members of the public to do both.

The creation of small donor PACs to empower the efforts of working people and allow their small dollar contributions to have a meaningful impact in races.

The 6-1 public match program, as public financing is one of the most powerful tools available to expand the pool of candidates to those who have less access to wealth, and to expand grassroots organizing and uplift the voices of everyday Oregonians to influence political change.

Staff in-kind support, a critical way community organizations participate in elections. The -1 amendments preserves the ability for groups to be able to provide in-kind staff support while also placing a \$50,000 limit on in-kind staff time.

As someone who has worked in Oregon politics for 12 years, I want to recognize a group of people that are incredibly important to our democracy and cannot be left out of this discussion: campaign organizers. In my first campaign job in 2009, I made \$24,000 dollars per year, and regularly worked 65-75 hours per week, 7 days a week. After taxes, I took home about \$5 for every hour I worked. As we work together to get big money out of politics, we can no longer expect workers to be martyrs for a cause, and we must be mindful to set limits that ensure campaign staff are provided fair, living wages and health benefits.

We support -1 amendments to HB 2680 and believe that it balances the need to limit the influence of big money in politics as well as increasing transparency and accountability to elections, while building a more inclusive democracy that provides Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC) a greater voice.

Thank you,

Christel Allen
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NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon