

One of the most important things that any representative government can do is to limit the powers of the rich and powerful to influence elections and legislation. Oregon desperately needs campaign finance reform as clearly presented in the 2019 Oregonian & ProPublica series entitled *Polluted by Money: How Corporate Cash Corrupted One of the Greenest States in America*. I am an aquatic ecologist especially dismayed by the destruction of stream and river habitat that has contributed to the endangerment of our once bountiful salmon runs, because of poor forest practices. Those same practices, as demonstrated in the Oregonian & ProPublica series, also destroyed once-sustainable logging communities and their tax bases. But this is only one blatant example resulting from campaign corruption. Therefore, the Legislature should pass meaningful campaign finance reform or leave it to voters to pass it at the ballot. At a minimum, those reforms should include 1) clear limits on the amount any contributor can contribute to campaigns; 2) full transparency regarding which people and which interests are making those contributions; and 3) substantial fines on those who violate those standards. The reforms should NOT be biased by inputs from major corporate campaign spenders. Money should not rule in a democracy, otherwise it eventually becomes an oligarchy.