



February 23, 2024

House Committee on Rules
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 4024

Chair Fahey, Vice Co-Chairs Helfrich and Kropf, and members of the House Committee on Rules,

My name is Jessica Maravilla. I am the Policy Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon (ACLU of Oregon), and I provide this testimony as a representative of the ACLU of Oregon. We are a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to defending and advancing democracy, civil liberties, and civil rights, with more than 27,000 members statewide.

We submit this testimony in support of HB 4024 and campaign finance reform.

The ACLU of Oregon has an internal policy that sets out our position on campaign finance reform. It starts with this preamble:

Protecting the integrity of the electoral process is essential to the maintenance of a free society, including the ability to defend cherished civil liberties like free speech and promote principles of civic equality among all electors. Unrestricted contributions to campaigns by individuals or entities may lead to political corruption or create an appearance of undue influence, both of which undermine public confidence in the fairness of our political system. They may also inhibit or prevent access to the ballot or political participation by underrepresented groups and may contribute to a political system that gives the affluent disproportionate influence. Unrestricted expenditures to support or oppose a particular candidate can similarly undermine the democratic process. This reformulation of the ACLU of Oregon's policy on campaign finance is an attempt to balance the competing civil liberties interests involved in Oregon's system of elections.



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

Oregon

Under our campaign finance policy, we support the setting of reasonable limits on individual and organizational contributions to political campaigns and reasonable limits on individual and organizational expenditures. Under our analysis, what is a reasonable limit will vary depending on the election and the type of limit (contribution or expenditure), and factors that we consider in determining reasonableness include, but are not limited to, geography, the historical costs of the particular race, and the number of eligible electors. However, we also believe that limits should not be so low as to prevent meaningful communication with the electorate.

As well, we support the robust and timely disclosure of direct and indirect campaign contributions and expenditures, regardless of source, while at the same time recognizing that civil liberty interests in associational privacy and anonymous speech can outweigh the public interest in disclosure of political contributions and expenditures in some circumstances.

Ultimately, we believe that any campaign finance reform law should help create an equal playing field for the organizations and individuals on all sides of the political spectrum, regardless of how much money they have. Moreover, campaign finance reform should help protect and support the democratic participation of everyday community members and workers who do not have wealth or special access to politicians, as well as for historically-disenfranchised communities including Black, Indigenous and People of Color and low-income people. These are the ingredients for creating a robust democracy of, by, and for all the people.

We support HB 4024 because it is consistent with our internal campaign finance policy which carefully balances the multiple important interests of democracy and civil liberties that are involved and because HB 4024 is consistent with the ACLU of Oregon's commitment to a democracy of, by, and for all the people.

For these reasons, the ACLU of Oregon respectfully requests that you support HB 4024.

Thank you,
Jessica Maravilla, Policy Director
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ACLU of Oregon