



To: House Committee on Rules
From: Mary Chaffin, on behalf of Act for Democracy
Re: HB 4024-5, Campaign Finance Reform
Date: March 3, 2024

Act for Democracy is an Indivisible group working to sustain democracy through grassroots initiatives in order to advance and promote progressive legislation and support worthy issues.

We are a strong supporter of Initiative Petition 9. Signature gathering for IP 9 is currently underway to get it on the November ballot. IP 9 was developed by a coalition of good government groups including Honest Elections Oregon, League of Women Voters of Oregon, OSPIRG, Common Cause, Alliance for Democracy, Independent Party of Oregon, Pacific Green Party, Oregon Progressive Party, and COIN.

We are submitting testimony against HB 4024-5. Although the -5 amendment has lowered a few contribution limits from the -3 amendment, it has also added new loopholes. Filing this latest version at 4:55PM on a Friday in advance of an 8:00AM Monday hearing is both telling and disrespectful to voters.

Since both corporate and union interests will benefit hugely from our current system - which has no contribution limits and little or no real disclosure - we are not surprised that they back this bill. They would naturally like things to stay just the way they are. And it does not escape us that the current Legislature are the beneficiaries of this system as well. It is clear to us that the real impetus to pass HB 4024 is spurred by the fear of real campaign finance reform, as embodied by IP 9.

Good government groups as well as local and national experts on campaign finance reform are close to reaching their goal of getting IP 9 on the ballot for November - an effort that is the culmination of years of hard work. However, now HB 4024-5 appears in an already crowded legislative session as yet another effort to thwart the will of the voters. The legislature has better ways to spend its time for the people of Oregon.

Given the long history of how voter attempts to enact real campaign finance reform have been blocked at every turn (see Tim Nesbitt in the Oregon [Capital Chronicle, Feb 29, 2024](#)) you now have a chance to level the playing field and restore Oregonians' fast-eroding trust in the democratic process.

Just pass IP 9!