

Newcomb, Melanie,

Subject: FW: Submission in leadup to PEC meeting this week
Attachments: PEC letter - Contribution limits - 9_9_24.pdf

From: David Shor <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 3:45:57 PM
To: Heidorn, Nicolas <NHeidorn@oaklandca.gov>; Doran, Suzanne <SDoran@oaklandca.gov>
Cc: Kimi, Bay Rising <[REDACTED]>; Pecolia Manigo <[REDACTED]>; Sietse Goffard <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Submission in leadup to PEC meeting this week

Hi Nicolas and Suzanne,

On behalf of Oakland Rising, Bay Rising, Asian Law Caucus, and California Common Cause, we submit this letter voicing our lack of support for the proposal to raise contribution limits above what was enacted by Measure W. Please send this along to the commissioners in the leadup to Wednesday's meeting.

All the best,
David

David Shor (*he/him*)

Money in Politics, California Common Cause

phone: [REDACTED]
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September 9, 2024

Commissioners
Oakland Public Ethics Commission
Re: Proposal to increase campaign contribution limits

Dear Members of the Public Ethics Commission,

The below signed organizations have worked for years on democratic reforms for Oakland, including support for Oakland's Fair Elections Act (2022 Measure W) which received 73% of Oakland voters' support, and the effort to establish California's first Democracy Dollars program here in our home of Oakland. We understand that the Commission is reviewing a proposal that may go before the City Council to increase local campaign contribution limits. **We are asking the commission to reject this proposal, and maintain the campaign contribution limits enacted by the Fair Elections Act.**

Maintaining lower contribution limits better serves the public interest and aligns with the goals of the Fair Elections Act. The current lower contribution limits reduce the influence of wealthy donors on local politics. Raising the limits back to previous levels would encourage candidates to focus even more on fundraising from the wealthiest individuals, potentially skewing political representation. This would be contrary to the overarching goal of the Fair Elections Act to reduce the influence of big money in politics.

We acknowledge concerns that lower limits may push some organizations towards independent expenditures. However, we believe this issue would persist regardless of whether the limit is at the current level or raised to previous amounts. The solution lies in comprehensive reform rather than reverting to higher contribution limits.

Finally, we note that maintaining lower contribution limits in the interim period before the full implementation of Democracy Dollars is crucial for preserving the integrity of our local democratic process. It demonstrates Oakland's commitment to reducing the influence of money in politics and encourages a more diverse pool of candidates and donors.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration of these arguments and your commitment to upholding the principles of fair elections in Oakland.

Oakland Rising, Bay Rising, California Common Cause, Asian Law Caucus