

**From:** [Gail Wallace](#)  
**To:** [Ethics Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment for March 8 PEC meeting re:Agenda Item 6  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 8, 2023 12:44:06 PM

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To:

Acting Executive Director Suzanne Doran  
Commissioners Ryan Micik (Chair), Charlotte Hill (Vice-Chair), Alea Gage, Arvon Perteet, Vincent Steele, and Francis Upton IV

From: BayPEC Coalition

COMMENT:

On the topic of setting metrics for success, we wish to note that results from Seattle grew over time, as voters, candidates, and community organizations grew more familiar and more comfortable with the program, and as the City got more adept at explaining and publicizing it. We expect to see a similar progression in Oakland in which the effects of the Fair Elections Act will amplify over successive election cycles.

As a result, we endorse collecting data on the elements identified as success measures in the staff report linked to this evening's agenda, but we believe setting hard goals and targets is more important for the 2026 or 2028 elections. Data collected in 2024 will primarily serve to provide a baseline to measure achievements in successive election cycles. It will also inform ongoing efforts to improve all elements of the program. We caution against using 2024 data to "grade" the first election cycle as a success or failure.

We suggest adding to the list of things tracked in the first cycle, and in future cycles, measurements on the use of Democracy Dollars in various Oakland districts, the percentage of residents who give in each district, the size of the disparities in giving between districts. We want to increase participation in the city's politics overall, of course, but hope to bring new people into our democracy, not give more power and voice to those who already have it. Along those same lines, we recommend tracking the number of first-time donors if that is indeed possible, so we can potentially see if the Democracy Dollars program is bringing new people into the donor pool over time.

We also suggest taking measurements that indicate resident satisfaction with the democracy dollars program overall, the paper vouchers, the online interface, and so on. Does the program feel accessible and understandable to regular community members, or do complaints received by the PEC, seen on social media, or elsewhere indicate confusion and frustration? Similarly, we suggest tracking candidate satisfaction. Does the program feel accessible and understandable to candidates, especially first time and grassroots candidates, or are the barriers and burdens of participation large enough that candidates are scared off from participating in the program? These topics may require qualitative instead of quantitative data.

Overall, we recognize that in the first year of implementation, setting specific targets is important but less vital than focusing on the following goals and using success metrics documenting results to inform future development of the Democracy Dollars program:

- An outreach program that effectively reaches Oakland's many diverse communities

using multiple outreach strategies and languages.

- A comprehensive training for candidates who wish to use Democracy Dollars.
- A smooth user interface for residents and candidates.