

To: Oregon House Committee on Rules
Re: Testimony on HB 2578
Date: February 28, 2017
From: Donna Cohen

I wish to express support for HB 2578. Following Portland's lead toward public financing of elections is a move in the right direction. As we know, Oregon is one of only 6 states in the country which allow unlimited campaign contributions [something which also should be changed].

The influence of private money - and often "dark money", which cannot be traced - in state elections is destructive of basic democratic values of government representation fairly from all parts of society. HB 2578 will allow those with more limited means to enter races and this can only lead to a broadening of the pool of candidates for office.

Not only will it broaden the candidate base, it will broaden the public's interest in elections, as well. This can only be good for our state.

I encourage the committee to move this bill out of committee with a "do pass" recommendation.

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