

February 28, 2017

Dear Speaker Kotek and Senate President Courtney:

As a diverse group of advocates that represent hundreds of thousands of Oregonians, we believe Oregon should build on other leading reforms to increase participation in our elections and government by adopting Small Donor Elections program.

A Small Donor Elections program, like the one in HB 2578, brings the voices of ordinary Oregonians back into the center of our elections and government by creating a way for candidates to raise enough money to win campaigns only from small donors. It does this by providing a six-to-one match on small contributions to candidates that don't accept contributions from large donors.

Oregonians are concerned that the current system of how candidates raise money creates barriers for many Oregonians to participate in and have their voices heard in our democracy. Our state is stronger when everyone has an equal say and greater opportunity to engage in our democracy. We want to raise our voices to unlock meaningful solutions to our state's biggest challenges. Small Donor Elections creates new pathways to get us there.

Our groups are on the front lines every day advancing the interests of Oregon's working families, women, people of color, small businesses, LGBTQ individuals, and other groups.

We believe in an Oregon where the people we serve contribute to meaningful solutions to our state's biggest challenges, and where they have a truly equal chance to run for office to do so. But there are real barriers to running and participating under our current system. Small Donor Elections offers a powerful suite of tools to boost the trust and pride Oregonians have in their government and to offer more Oregonians an avenue to engage in the state that we all love.

Signed,

Jesse Beason, Amplify  
Charlie Fisher, Oregon State Public Interest Research Group  
Alice Perry, Latino Network  
Lindsey Scholten, Oregon League of Conservation Voters  
Nikki Fischer, The Bus Project  
Khahn Le, Main Street Alliance Oregon  
Joe Baessler, AFSCME Oregon  
Joseph Santos-Lyons, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon  
Kate Titus, Common Cause Oregon  
Joann Hardesty, NAACP Portland Branch  
Matt Swanson, SEIU Oregon State Council  
Norman Turrill, Oregon League of Women Voters  
Emily McLain, Oregon Education Association  
Karly Edwards, Oregon Working Families Party  
Amanda Manjarrez, Coalition of Communities of Color