


Chair Williamson and members of the House Rules Committee,

Please support campaign finance reform bill HB 2584.

Among the many goals of HB 2584, the bill better defines coordinated campaign expenditures; creates means to investigate campaign expenditures; and creates penalties for violations.

It takes political courage to run for office. Ironically, when it comes to political speech, political leaders seem to be most threatened.<sup>[1]</sup>

**Tina Kotek's Issue Positions (Political Courage Test)** [Print](#) [Track This Politician](#)




**Office:** State House (OR) - District 44, Democratic Speaker

Project Vote Smart does not permit the use of its name or programs in any campaign activity, including advertising, debates, and speeches.

Tina Kotek has refused to provide voters with positions on key issues covered by the 2016 Political Courage Test, despite repeated requests. Historically, candidates have failed to complete our test due to the advice they receive from their parties and advisors and out of fear of negative attack ads.

[What is the Political Courage Test?](#)

**Michael McLane's Issue Positions (Political Courage Test)** [Print](#) [Track This Politician](#)



**Office:** State House (OR) - District 55, Republican Republican Leader

Project Vote Smart does not permit the use of its name or programs in any campaign activity, including advertising, debates, and speeches.

Michael McLane has refused to provide voters with positions on key issues covered by the 2016 Political Courage Test, despite repeated requests. Historically, candidates have failed to complete our test due to the advice they receive from their parties and advisors and out of fear of negative attack ads.

[What is the Political Courage Test?](#)

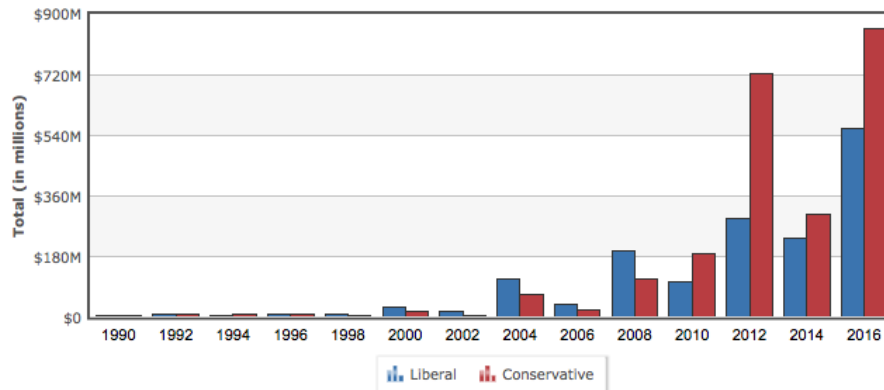
This seems particularly true since Citizens United prohibited government restriction of independent political expenditures by a nonprofit corporation, opening the floodgates to money in politics. Political expenditures by organizations independent of political parties and candidate campaigns are sometimes called “outside spending” which includes independent expenditures,

electioneering communications, and communication costs. The League of Women Voters[2] says that independent expenditures are generally made by a very small group of people. They believe unlimited independent expenditures have the potential to distort the political process in many ways.

Since the Citizen United decision, independent expenditures have skyrocketed. [3]

| Cycle | Total           | Independent Expenditures | Electioneering Communications | Communication Costs |
|-------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| 2016  | \$1,436,165,657 | \$1,422,104,502          | \$1,415,227                   | \$12,645,928        |
| 2014  | \$562,720,738   | \$549,380,760            | \$8,292,848                   | \$5,047,130         |
| 2012  | \$1,038,736,997 | \$1,002,135,419          | \$15,437,830                  | \$21,230,660        |
| 2010  | \$309,834,180   | \$205,519,230            | \$79,291,379                  | \$25,023,571        |
| 2008  | \$338,441,092   | \$143,659,191            | \$131,137,181                 | \$63,644,720        |
| 2006  | \$69,534,653    | \$37,801,719             | \$15,436,132                  | \$16,296,802        |
| 2004  | \$193,129,472   | \$63,885,795             | \$98,898,197                  | \$30,345,480        |
| 2002  | \$27,686,417    | \$16,747,650             | N/A                           | \$10,938,767        |
| 2000  | \$51,638,411    | \$33,778,636             | N/A                           | \$17,859,775        |
| 1998  | \$15,191,107    | \$10,266,937             | N/A                           | \$4,924,170         |
| 1996  | \$17,884,043    | \$10,167,742             | N/A                           | \$7,716,301         |
| 1994  | \$9,538,844     | \$5,219,215              | N/A                           | \$4,319,629         |
| 1992  | \$19,635,123    | \$10,947,342             | N/A                           | \$8,687,781         |
| 1990  | \$7,213,219     | \$5,650,524              | N/A                           | \$1,562,695         |

## Total Liberal vs. Conservative Outside Spending, Excluding Party Committees



Special interests use independent expenditures to pay for attack ads and increasingly use social media to promulgate them. This was relevant in the 2014 gubernatorial election between incumbent John Kitzhaber and then-Representative Dennis Richardson.[4] It is no wonder the Secretary of State keeps his positions under lock and key (never mind the fact that we should all have the ability to change our positions over time) after this YouTube ad[5].

### Dennis Richardson's Issue Positions (Political Courage Test) [Print](#) [Track This Politician](#)



**Office:** Secretary of State (OR), Republican

Project Vote Smart does not permit the use of its name or programs in any campaign activity, including advertising, debates, and speeches.

Dennis Richardson has refused to provide voters with positions on key issues covered by the 2014 Political Courage Test, despite repeated requests.


[What is the Political Courage Test?](#)

Attack ads manipulate the recipient by taking a politician's voting record and public comments out of context. Consider the Capitol Watch PAC attack ad that threatened Rep. Hansell[6] in 2015. This group suggested he was soft on undocumented immigrants and criminals. Another accusation: "It's become painfully obvious that on some of our core issues, Sen. Hansell is voting with the Democrats." If this kind of accusation came during a primary, Sen. Hansell would be able to investigate whether this ad was coordinated with the opponent's campaign.

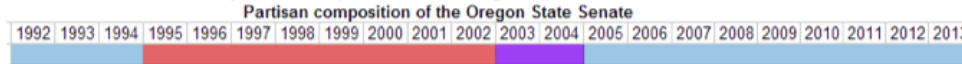
One can argue that action speaks louder than words--that the astute voter looks more closely at the nuances of a politician's votes. That only goes so far when it comes to how bills move in a legislature. Under the sway of paid lobbyists, bills are more likely to die in committee. Lobbyists, without the scrutiny of public hearings, regularly meet with politicians. One would never know if these lobbyists pose veiled threats that the lawmaker's candidacy may be jeopardized by unfavorable support or opposition of a particular bill.

Dark money in politics is a dark stain on democracy. Out-of-state corporations put their finger into the wind when it comes to their financial (often bipartisan) support of candidates. Oregon is a blue state... for now. Indeed, Oregon's blue streak needs to be extended at Ballotpedia.[\[7\]](#)



**Current partisan balance**

| Party  | As of March 2017 |
|--|------------------|
|  Democratic Party | 17               |
|  Republican Party | 13               |
| Vacancies  | 0                |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>30</b>        |

The chart below shows the partisan composition of the Oregon State Senate from 1992 to 2013.



**Current partisan balance**

| Party  | As of March 2017 |
|--|------------------|
|  Democratic Party | 35               |
|  Republican Party | 24               |
| Vacancies  | 1                |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>60</b>        |

The chart below shows the partisan composition of the Oregon State House of Representatives from 1992 to 2013.



The National Conference on State Legislatures has compiled a 50-state chart summarizing states' independent expenditure reporting requirements.[\[8\]](#) While states cannot limit independent expenditures, courts have upheld transparency laws, ruling that disclosure provides the public with valuable information about candidates and their donors. Oregon is among the states that require reporting based on when a person or group has exceeded a statutory threshold. The current trigger for reporting is when aggregate expenses exceeding \$750.

| State  | Who is required to report?  | Dollar Threshold   | Required Reports  |
|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Oregon</b><br>Statutes: §260.044;<br>§ 260.083. | Individuals; corporations and other group entities; political committees. | <b>Non-Committees:</b> An aggregate amount over \$750 in a calendar year.<br><b>Committees:</b> any independent expenditure. | <p><b>Non-Committees</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report due within 7 days of initially exceeding threshold amount.</li> <li>• Additional reports are generally due within 30 days of date of making a subsequent independent expenditure. Independent expenditures made prior to the 42<sup>nd</sup> day before an election that have not been reported by the 43<sup>rd</sup> day before an election are due by the 35<sup>th</sup> day before an election.</li> <li>• If IE is made within 42 days of primary or general election, the statement must be filed within 7 days.</li> </ul> <p><b>Committees</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report generally due within 30 days of date of independent expenditure.</li> <li>• Independent expenditures made between the 42nd day before the election and Election Day are due 7 calendar days after the date of the transaction.</li> <li>• Independent expenditures that occur prior to the 42nd day before the election and have not been reported by the 43rd day before the election are due by the 35th day before the election.</li> </ul> |

Please be politically courageous. Support HB 2584.

Respectfully,

*Kris Alman*

*Resident Washington County*

---

[1] <https://votesmart.org/>

[2] <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/money-politics-independent-expenditures>

[3] [https://www.opensecrets.org/outsidespending/cycle\\_tots.php](https://www.opensecrets.org/outsidespending/cycle_tots.php)

[4] [http://www.oregonlive.com/politics/index.ssf/2014/08/attack\\_ads\\_go\\_digital\\_in\\_orego.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/politics/index.ssf/2014/08/attack_ads_go_digital_in_orego.html)

[5] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-OMkqQ9-ZQE>

[6] <http://www.eastoregonian.com/eo/local-news/20150120/hansell-targeted-in-attack-ad>

[7] [https://ballotpedia.org/Oregon\\_State\\_Legislature](https://ballotpedia.org/Oregon_State_Legislature)

[8] <http://www.ncsl.org/blog/2014/08/13/ncsl-chart-focuses-on-independent-expenditures.aspx>