



December 15, 2020

Dear Chair Smith Warner, Vice-Chair Drazan, Vice-Chair Holvey, and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Michelle Hicks and I am here representing the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO).

My organization serves the Asian Pacific Islander community throughout Oregon. I am writing to urge support for campaign finance reform, which will create more equitable access to our political processes.

Oregon is one in five states that does not have any statewide campaign finance reform limits set. The lack of limits has led to a substantial increase in campaign spending over the years with election outcomes disproportionately favoring white candidates who have the social capital, wealth and privilege allowing them to raise more money. Costly campaigns are one of the many insurmountable barriers for grassroots candidates of color, who are reflective of our vibrant state, to be in elected office. Not only have candidates of color been systematically excluded from gaining social capital, wealth, and privilege but to succeed they must raise the same or substantially more money than white candidates.

As a representative of a community based C4 organization who has led and supported campaigns that are transforming Oregon into a state where all people have the rights, recognitions, and resources needed to thrive, **too often we see candidates and ballot measures fail because they were outraised** allowing wealthier, establishment candidates and interests continue to have their voice heard.

For example, last election Measure 26-218, the metro transportation measure that was supposed to fund transportation improvements in predominantly Black, Indigenous, communities of color across the metro region failed for this very reason. The Stop the Metro Wage Tax campaign, who's top donors were Nike, Intel, The Standard and Daimler Trucks with significant contributions from Tillamook Creamery, Lithia Motors and Cambia Health Solutions, raised and spent around \$3 million outspending community organizations like APANO, three to one.¹ In total the campaigns spent around \$4 million, a substantial amount of money that could have been invested in our communities as Black, Indigenous Oregonians of color are being disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

With the overwhelming passage of Measure 107, we have an opportunity to spend our money where it truly matters and are one step closer to creating an Oregon that we can truly call home.

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<https://www.opb.org/article/2020/09/26/nike-intel-join-corporations-donating-to-stop-portland-area-transportation-measure/>

On behalf of the Asian Pacific Islander community in Oregon, I am here to ask you to vote and pass meaningful and substantial campaign finance reform. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Michelle Hicks, Field Manager, APANO