



February 23, 2024

To: Oregon House Committee on Rules  
From: Doug Kellogg, Americans for Tax Reform  
Re: Opposition Testimony on H.B. 4024 Amendment 3

**On behalf of Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) and our supporters across Oregon, I strongly urge you to reject Amendment 3 to House Bill 4024.** This legislation is an attack on Oregonians' rights to privacy and free speech and free association.

The rights to free speech and free association are what allow people to support their favorite charities, government watchdogs, community, and religious organizations, without fear that those in power who disagree will punish or intimidate them – or that an online mob will try to get them fired.

Americans understand privacy is needed to protect their rights: 70% of voters support private giving, and 70% don't think anyone has a right to know what groups they contribute to (according to a People United for Privacy survey). They also understand these rights are under threat. A 2020 Cato Institute poll found 62% of respondents don't feel they can express opinions publicly. In 2022, A Siena College/New York Times poll found, "Eighty-four percent of Americans say that some Americans not exercising their freedom of speech in everyday situations due to fear of retaliation or harsh criticism is either a very (40%) or somewhat (44%) serious problem."

Amendment 3 would impose dangerous disclosure rules that would subject supporters of non-profit causes to harassment and intimidation. While the purported focus of the amendment is on transparency and elections, it engages in the trend of expanding definitions of campaign or election activities to limit the ability of citizen groups, non-profits, and issue advocacy organizations to talk about policy issues.

Far from improving accountability, subjecting non-profit supporters to persecution will undermine the ability of citizens to organize and hold government accountable.

Covering non-profit advocacy groups talking about policies or legislation supported by sitting elected officials would rope these organizations into figuring out the "original source of funds" for the money they spent on that communication. That means the initial person or business who earned the money. This absurd standard would be impossible to fulfill in many cases.

Even if tracking funds down to the person who initially earned the money is possible, it's likely unconstitutional, and would result in the government having big databases of people supporting various causes, and voices being silenced as groups stop talking under threat of fines and legal proceedings.

As the amendment itself acknowledges, people may be at risk of physical harm due to their personal information being published or leaked. While the amendment says groups can make the case to the Secretary of State to have a contributor exempted if they would be subject to physical harm, is that office prepared to effectively judge that? Further, physical harm is not required to intimidate and silence someone – reputational or financial attack can be pursued online without any physical threat.

Simply put, this legislation would give government powers it was never intended to have at the cost of degrading the most basic constitutional rights of citizens. This would mean less informed citizens. This dangerous measure should be rejected. *If you have any questions, or ATR can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at 202-783-0266 or [dkellogg@atr.org](mailto:dkellogg@atr.org).*

Thank you.

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