



Chair Fahey and Members of the committee,

My name is Lamar Wise; I'm the Political Director of Oregon AFSCME and I'm here to testify in support of HB 4024. Oregon AFSCME represents about 37,000 workers across the State of Oregon in both the public and private sectors. Our membership ranges from the professionals and techs at OHSU to the folks working in local governments that carry out essential services in every corner of the state.

Throughout our history, Oregon AFSCME has been steadfast in our commitment to expanding access to the ballot and advocating for a fair elections system. As an organization that has endorsed both Democrats and Republicans, we know democracy works best when we empower our citizens to be involved in the process. That is why one of our members is chief petitioner on IP 42, Transparent Elections for Grassroots Engagement, that is currently being circulated. We want to ensure Oregon makes meaningful progress to enact campaign contribution limits and level the playing field between the super-wealthy and average Oregonians.

Even though HB 4024 doesn't encompass all of our aspirations, we see it as an acceptable compromise in order to achieve our baseline goals. HB 4024 strikes the right balance between establishing meaningful contribution limits without eliminating the ability of candidates' to raise enough money to run professional campaigns and maintain control over their own voice and the messages, rather than ceding the communication entirely to dark-money funded independent expenditures.

Under HB 4024, small donor committees must have at least 2,500 contributors of less than \$250 to qualify for a higher limit. This provision incentivizes the type of grassroots engagement that Oregonians desire: everyday individuals contributing modest amounts, collectively amplifying their voices against entities with significantly greater financial resources in an unlimited system

However, we must acknowledge that the structure of small donor committees outlined in this compromise proposal demands a substantial investment of time and resources for organizing. Securing contributions from 2,500+ individuals requires numerous one-on-one conversations and extensive grassroots efforts to ensure full participation. We firmly believe that when voters unite around shared values, it fosters greater engagement in the democratic process.

Recognizing the challenge of entirely removing big money from politics, we emphasize the necessity of transparency measures to combat dark money. HB 4024 addresses this by establishing one of the most robust campaign spending disclosure systems nationwide, shedding light on the big-money special interests seeking to influence our elections. This



legislation mandates reporting requirements for donors to nonprofits and independent expenditure committees, ensuring transparency regarding the original sources of funding for campaign advertising.

Furthermore, HB 4024 reaffirms Oregon's longstanding commitment to transparency in campaign finance by investing in essential upgrades to the existing ORESTAR reporting and transparency system. These enhancements will simplify the system, making it more accessible and understandable for ordinary citizens.

While we acknowledge that HB 4024 will significantly alter how Oregon AFSCME and other labor unions participate in elections, we view it as a policy that we can live with while continuing to elevate the voices of our members. I am grateful for the opportunity to share our perspective, and I urge your support for HB 4024.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.