



February 28, 2017

Oregon Progressive Party Position on Bill at 2017 Session of Oregon Legislature:

HB 2578: Support, with Amendment

Dear Committee:

The Oregon Progressive Party (OPP) supports this bill, provided that it is amended to fix what appears to be a serious drafting error.

OPP supports public funding of election campaigns. HB 2578 appears to be a reasonable implementation of that concept, except for Section 3(3) of the bill, which states:

Section 3(3). In addition to qualified small dollar contributions and moneys received from the Small Donor Funded Elections Fund under subsection (2) of this section and section 4 of this 2017 Act, candidates who participate in the Small Donor Funded Elections program may:

- (a) Receive nonmatching small donor contributions from an unlimited number of donors.
- (b) Receive unlimited contributions from a person's political committee.
- (c) Receive in-kind assistance in negotiating services and goods with vendors from a political committee operated by a political party.

So Section 3(3) allows any participating candidate to "Receive unlimited contributions from a person's political committee."

ORS 260.005(16) defines "person" for purposes of campaign finance regulation:

(16) "Person" means an individual, corporation, limited liability company, labor organization, association, firm, partnership, joint stock company, club, organization or other combination of individuals having collective capacity.

So every political committee is "a person's political committee." Thus, Section 3(3)(b) would allow every participating candidate to receive unlimited contributions from all political committees. The public funding component would just be a bonus on top of unlimited private funding.

We assume that is not why the sponsor of the bill intended, as it would contradict Section 3(3)(a), which limits nonmatching private contributions to small ones.

So we suggest that Section 3(3)(b) be amended to read:

- (b) Receive unlimited contributions from any People's political committee.

We believe that was the intent of the sponsor and that the correct word "People's" was erroneously changed to "person's". A People's political committee, as defined in HB 2578, is "a political committee that accepts contributions only from individuals in aggregate amounts of no more than \$150 per calendar year." Allowing unlimited contributions to participating candidates from People's political committees is quite acceptable.

Oregon Progressive Party

Daniel Meek
authorized legal representative
dan@meek.net
503-293-9021

