

**September 7, 2006**

## **OREGON SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT**

Today, the Oregon Supreme Court confirmed that Measure 46, the Oregon Campaign Finance Reform Constitutional Amendment, is a valid proposal and shall not be removed from the November ballot.

The Court concluded:

Second, IP 8 is not a complicated measure. If adopted, IP 8 will do essentially two things: (1) create a general authority for both the people and the legislature to enact laws regulating campaign finances; but (2) condition the legislature's ability in that regard through a supermajority procedural requirement. The supermajority requirement that IP 8 would place on the legislature both carries out and limits the general authority to enact contribution and expenditure laws that the measure would create. In other words, the supermajority requirement is a procedural condition on which the right to exercise substantive authority is predicated. Viewed in that manner, the constitutional changes proposed by IP 8 are "closely related" and therefore do not offend the Article XVII, section 1, separate-vote requirement.

[Note: "IP 8" means Initiative Petition 8, which is now Measure 46 on the November ballot.]

The full opinion is at <http://www.publications.ojd.state.or.us/S53693.htm>

The lawsuit to remove the measure from the ballot was brought by employees of the Oregon chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), with financial backing from ACLU. We have learned, however, that the decision to bring this lawsuit to throw Measure 46 off the ballot was not presented to, or approved by, any board of directors the ACLU or its Oregon chapter. Nor did the membership of ACLU vote to bring this lawsuit.

One of the parties in the case was a Measure 46 chief petitioner, David Delk. "It is good to have the constitutionality of our measure decided now, so people will know that their votes for campaign finance reform in Oregon will accomplish the reforms that are needed," Delk said. "It also means that Oregon will benefit from the hard work of over 1,000 volunteers, over 1,500 donors, and over 157,000 signers of the petition for Measure 46."

"According to the ACLU, money equals free speech, and that is the way they like it" said Dan Meek, the attorney who represented the chief petitioners on Measure 46. "Now the voters of Oregon will have a chance to change that and join the other 45 states that have limits on political campaign contributions."

"We have to get big money out of Oregon politics," said Harry Lonsdale, a supporter of the campaign finance reform initiatives, Measure 46 and the companion Measure 47. "Right now the big corporations, utilities, tobacco companies, and insurance companies run this state by doling out tens of millions of dollars of campaign cash in every election cycle."

Ken Lewis, former President of the Port of Portland, said, "This is a win for the democratic process. These measures will reduce the power of the special interests to get special favors from government, at the expense of the public. They will help to level the political playing field, so the public cannot be overwhelmed by the corporate contributions."

Much additional information about the measures is at <http://www.fairelections.net>

Here is a summary of both measures: <http://www.fairelections.net/summaries.htm>

Here is our latest informative flyer: <http://www.fairelections.net/getout.pdf>

Here is the text of Measure 46: <http://www.fairelections.net/2006pet8.pdf>.

Here is the text of Measure 47: <http://www.fairelections.net/2006pet37.pdf>.

## **Background**

Corporations pushed up the total spending on political races in Oregon from \$4 million in 1996 to \$42 million in 2002 - that's ten times more. Only about 1% of Oregonians make political contributions, and over 75% of the money now comes from only 1% of those few contributors. Only 3% of the money comes in amounts of \$50 or less. Almost 70% comes in amounts of \$1,000 or more.

It now usually costs over \$500,000 to win a contested seat in the State Senate and over \$250,000 to win such a seat in the State House of Representatives.

**Corporate contributions are so huge in Oregon that Tom Delay would not even be noticed here.** He was indicted for channeling \$155,000 of corporate money into races for the Texas Legislature. **Doing that would be legal in Oregon** and insignificant, since the corporations have pumped over \$20 million into races for the Oregon Legislature in the last two election cycles.

Measure 46 is a constitutional amendment that allows limits on campaign contributions in Oregon. We need this, because the Oregon Supreme Court in 1997 ruled that the Oregon Constitution now does not allow any limits on political contributions in any race for state or local public office.

Measure 47 is a statute that would enact a comprehensive system of campaign finance reform for candidate elections, including a ban on corporate contributions and limits on individual contributions to \$500 in any statewide race and \$100 in any non-statewide race. It allows unlimited contributions by Small Donor Committees that combine donations from individuals of \$50 or less per year.

## **WE SUPPORT MEASURES 46 AND 47:**

**Sierra Club  
Alliance for Democracy  
Pacific Green Party  
Oregon Gray Panthers  
"Granny D"**

**OSPIRG  
Democratic Party of Clackamas County  
Northwest Progressive Community  
Health Care for All Oregon  
State Senator Charlie Ringo**