

Open Letter to Democratic Representatives From Democratic Donors Regarding the Fair Elections Now Act

May 6, 2009

Dear Representative,

We are writing to encourage you to cosponsor **H.R. 1826, the Fair Elections Now Act**. This bipartisan legislation was introduced by Reps. John Larson and Walter Jones on March 31st. We believe, when passed, it will reduce the amount of time members of Congress spend raising money, and will free up your time and attention for addressing the critical matters before the nation. A companion bill has been introduced in the Senate by Sens. Dick Durbin and Arlen Specter.

The current system of campaign financing requires an enormous investment in pursuing a relatively small number of Americans who can contribute or raise significant amounts of money. This proposal would allow candidates the option of running for Congress with funds raised entirely from small donors – the ordinary citizens at the heart of our democracy – along with matching public funds.

Under this legislation, candidates would raise a significant number of contributions of \$100 or less in order to qualify for a set amount of public funding. Candidates would receive additional public funds to remain competitive by continuing to raise small donations. Self-funding would be prohibited for those receiving public funds.

It is modeled on successful laws in several states and cities. Nearly 400 candidates at the state and local level were elected under these laws in 2008. Elected officials and voters alike report they prefer this new system to the existing one.

High-dollar fundraising has become symbolic in the minds of many voters as the reason why Washington isn't addressing their concerns. A February national bipartisan poll conducted for a coalition of campaign reform organizations found that 73% of Americans believe that campaign contributions to members of Congress are partly to blame for the financial crisis, and that 79% of Americans worry that fundraising pressures will impede progress on health care, energy, and global warming legislation.

With so much at stake in Washington today, we believe it is shortsighted to continue down the present unsustainable path of skyrocketing campaign spending. **The Fair Elections Now Act is a common sense idea whose time has come, a change that will set us on a better path in the years ahead.**

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We hope you agree with us, and offer your support by co-sponsoring this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Naomi Aberly	Alan Patricof
Grant Abert	Susan Patricof
Elaine Attias	Doug Phelps
Amb. Elizabeth Bagley	Steve Phillips
Smith Bagley	Drummond Pike
Robert Bowditch	Rachel Pritzker
William Budinger	Abby Rockefeller
James Kimo Campbell	Charles Rodgers
Peter Copen	Marsha Rosenbaum
Rosemary Faulkner	Manny Rouvelas
Ron Feldman	Vin Ryan
Christopher Findlater	Deborah Sagner
Murray Galinson	Guy T. Saperstein
James Gollin	Dick Senn
Lee Halprin	Steve Silberstein
Francis W. Hatch	Alison Smith
Arnold Hiatt	William Soskin
John Hunting	Martin Stevenson
Greg Jobin-Leeds	Pat Stryker
John S. Johnson	Ellen Susman
Wayne Jordan	Steve Susman
Craig Kaplan	Margery Tabankin
Michael Kieschnick	Kate Villers
Steve Kirsch	Philippe Villers
Arthur D. Lipson	Scott Wallace
Henry Lord	George Wallerstein
Anna Hawken McKay	Marc Weiss
Rob McKay	Al Yates
Sally Minard	Joe Zimlich