

Written Testimony - Agenda Item 517/502/470

Agenda Item	Name	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
470	Anonymous	Oppose	<p>GENDA ITEM 470</p> <p>RE: Public Comment Opposed to Changes in the Small Donor Elections Code</p> <p>Dear Mayor Wheeler & Council,</p> <p>The existing campaign matching funds program brought us our most current diverse council members to date.</p> <p>City of Portland voters adopted the new city charter to create a system that provides accessible elections to encourage diverse representation on council.</p> <p>As we have the new charter system, the campaign matching fund is arguably redundant and unnecessary. This duplication of resources is an incredibly important issue when the need for more services across the city requires a thoughtful management of the budget. Instead of removing the matching funds, the proposed changes will INCREASE the match cap from \$240,000 to \$300,000.</p> <p>This increased cap with a significant increase in candidates could cost the city \$18 million each election cycle. In each election, two districts have a total of six seats. Assume an average of 10 people running for each seat. For context, the race for Commissioner Hardesty's seat had 13 candidates on the primary ballot and 18 for Commissioner Ryan's seat. At \$300,000 for 60 candidates, the city is responsible for \$18 million every election cycle.</p> <p>This increase is completely contrary to the Portland Charter Commission Auditor's Report June 2022 p. 19 states: "Estimated costs under proposed charter reforms are lower than current costs because there would be no costs associated with a primary election under ranked choice voting and because of assumed lower match caps."</p> <p>We all want big money out of politics. We also want to be smart with our city budget.</p> <p>Considering the new charter system, the city should lower the match cap not increase it. Even better, city should consider eliminating the matching funds but keep the donation cap, similar to the current Multnomah County Commissioner election process, to use our budget resource wisely.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Cheryl Huff</p>	No	06/04/23 6:40 PM
470	David S	Oppose	Let's let the new system run a bit, before pumping in more money. Thank you!	No	06/05/23
470	Anonymous	Oppose		No	06/05/23
470	Sherry Poole Todd	Oppose	Keep donations small. Put our budget money where it's needed most, which is not on elections.	No	06/05/23
470	Javier Gomez	Oppose	<p>re: Public Comment Opposed to Changes in the Small Donor Elections Code</p> <p>Dear Mayor Wheeler & Council,</p> <p>The existing campaign matching funds program brought us our most current diverse council members to date.</p> <p>City of Portland voters adopted the new city charter to create a system that provides accessible elections to encourage diverse representation on council.</p> <p>As we have the new charter system, the campaign matching fund is arguably redundant and unnecessary. This duplication of resources is an incredibly important issue when the need for more services across the city requires a thoughtful management of the budget. Instead of removing the matching funds, the proposed changes will INCREASE the match cap from \$240,000 to \$300,000.</p> <p>This increased cap with a significant increase in candidates could cost the city \$18 million each election cycle. In each election, two districts have a total of six seats. Assume an average of 10 people running for each seat. For context, the race for Commissioner Hardesty's seat had 13 candidates on the primary ballot and 18 for Commissioner Ryan's seat. At \$300,000 for 60 candidates, the city is responsible for \$18 million every election cycle.</p> <p>This increase is completely contrary to the Portland Charter Commission Auditor's Report June 2022 p. 19 states: "Estimated costs under proposed charter reforms are lower than current costs because there would be no costs associated with a primary election under ranked choice voting and because of assumed lower match caps."</p> <p>We all want big money out of politics. We also want to be smart with our city budget.</p> <p>Considering the new charter system, the city should lower the match cap not increase it. Even better, city should consider eliminating the matching funds but keep the donation cap, similar to the current Multnomah County Commissioner election process, to use our budget resource wisely.</p> <p>Thank you,</p>	No	06/05/23 8:47 AM

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470	Lance Goldenberg	Oppose	<p>Dear Mayor Wheeler & Council,</p> <p>We were very surprised and extremely disappointed to hear of the possibility that the city would be increasing matching funds to candidates from \$240,000 to \$300,000 under the upcoming charter reform system. This seems unnecessary, wasteful and in direct opposition to what was promised at various stages of the charter reform process.</p> <p>This increased cap with a significant increase in candidates could cost the city in the range of \$18 million each election cycle. (In each election, two districts have a total of six seats. Assume an average of 10 people running for each seat. For context, the race for Commissioner Hardesty's seat had 13 candidates on the primary ballot and 18 for Commissioner Ryan's seat. At \$300,000 for 60 candidates, the city would be responsible for \$18 million every election cycle!)</p> <p>This increase is completely contrary to the Portland Charter Commission Auditor's Report June 2022 p. 19 states: "Estimated costs under proposed charter reforms are lower than current costs because there would be no costs associated with a primary election under ranked choice voting and because of assumed lower match caps."</p> <p>We all want big money out of politics. We also want to be smart with our city budget. Considering the new charter system, the city should lower the match cap not increase it. Even better, the city should consider eliminating the matching funds but keep the donation cap, similar to the current Multnomah County Commissioner election process, to use our budget resource wisely.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Lance Goldenberg</p>	No	06/05/23 8:07 PM
470	Vikki Payne	Oppose	<p>I, like many other Portlanders, was shocked that the campaign matching funds program wasn't being eliminated now that we have adopted a new form of government. The whole spirit of the matching funds is exactly what the new charter aims to fix about our old election system - fair and accessible elections to encourage a diverse swath of candidates.</p> <p>Many questioned the oversight, or lack thereof, of the current program. Funds should be spent on local media buying and printing to boost the local economy, not mega corporations like YouTube and Facebook. Consulting funds should go to legitimate businesses, not friends or family, as city rules state all consultants must be registered to improve transparency.</p> <p>Right now there are two matching funds periods - one for the primary election (matching cap \$200k), and one for the general election (matching cap \$240k). We've eliminated the primary, so the Elections Commission has to pick a new timeline. Hardesty's seat had 13 candidates on the primary ballot; 18 for Ryan's seat, so an average of 10 people per seat. If we assume only the second amount of \$240k multiplied by 60 candidates, that's \$14.4 million the city may need to fund every 2 year election cycle. As the new charter is structured to enhance representation, shouldn't that be spent on other services?</p> <p>It is time to increase the cap on donations and eliminate the matching, similar to Multnomah County campaign finance rules. We all want big money out of politics; using taxpayer dollars for what is likely going to be many fringe candidates (it's going to be 'so much easier to run and win') is not going to make voters feel the system is working as intended. Minimally, the matching ratio should be reduced significantly, since campaigns will no longer be citywide. It's currently a 9:1 ratio, with 4 districts of equal population, that should be reduced by 75%, or 2.25:1. Furthermore, the Charter Commission's final report clearly stated that they believed costs of the small donor program would be less, both due to elimination of primary and "lower match caps".</p>	No	06/06/23 7:54 PM

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470	Ruthie Benjamin	Oppose	<p>AGENDA ITEM 470</p> <p>RE: Public Comment Opposed to Changes in the Small Donor Elections Code</p> <p>Dear Mayor Wheeler & Council,</p> <p>The existing campaign matching funds program brought us our most current diverse council members to date.</p> <p>City of Portland voters adopted the new city charter to create a system that provides accessible elections to encourage diverse representation on council.</p> <p>As we have the new charter system, the campaign matching fund is arguably redundant and unnecessary. This duplication of resources is an incredibly important issue when the need for more services across the city requires a thoughtful management of the budget. Instead of removing the matching funds, the proposed changes will INCREASE the match cap from \$240,000 to \$300,000.</p> <p>This increased cap with a significant increase in candidates could cost the city \$18 million each election cycle. In each election, two districts have a total of six seats. Assume an average of 10 people running for each seat. For context, the race for Commissioner Hardesty's seat had 13 candidates on the primary ballot and 18 for Commissioner Ryan's seat. At \$300,000 for 60 candidates, the city is responsible for \$18 million every election cycle.</p> <p>This increase is completely contrary to the Portland Charter Commission Auditor's Report June 2022 p. 19 states: "Estimated costs under proposed charter reforms are lower than current costs because there would be no costs associated with a primary election under ranked choice voting and because of assumed lower match caps."</p> <p>We all want big money out of politics. We also want to be smart with our city budget. Considering the new charter system, the city should lower the match cap not increase it. Even better, city should consider eliminating the matching funds but keep the donation cap, similar to the current Multnomah County Commissioner election process, to use our budget resource wisely.</p> <p>Thank you,</p>	No	06/07/23 12:59 AM