



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 99-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

November 22, 2019

To: [Senate Interim Committee On Campaign Finance](#)
[Senator Jeff Golden, Chair](#)
[Senator Ginny Burdick](#), Majority Leader
[Senator Fred Girod](#), Vice-Chair
[Committee exhibits](#)

Re: **Ideal CFR Limits Bill Elements – Comment**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon (LWVOR) and nationally (LWVUS) have supported campaign finance reform of elections with their studies and advocacy positions since the 1970s.

The League applauds the Principles of CFR that Sen. Golden explained Tuesday. The difficult task will be to get these ideals into legislation and passed by the legislature without features favoring any group.

The League would add a **fourth principle**, that the campaign finance system should provide enough money so that candidates can educate voters about themselves and about their positions on issues. If contribution limits are too low, then funding for campaign visibility may be inadequate, giving incumbents an advantage. An analysis should be made for any system of campaign finance to compare the limits with historic spending in various kinds of elections.

Turning now to the “Ideal CFR Limits Bill Elements” document. In the form presented, we found it difficult to analyze the limits, so we created this table of the limits:

Ideal CFR Limits Bill Elements		Contribution Limits*				
To: Entities	Statewide Candidate	Legislative Candidate	Legislative Caucus Committee	State Party Committee	Small Donor Committee	Multi-Candidate Committee
From: Individual	\$2000	\$750	\$2000/yr	\$2000/yr	\$200	\$200
Statewide Candidate	\$2000	\$750	\$2000/yr	\$2000/yr	\$200	\$200
Legislative Candidate	\$2000	\$750	\$2000/yr	\$2000/yr	\$200	\$200
Multi-candidate Committee	\$2000	\$750	\$2000/yr	\$2000/yr	\$200	\$200
(One) Leg. Caucus Committee	\$40,000	\$15,000	\$0	\$0	\$200	\$0
(One) State Party Committee	\$40,000	\$15,000	\$40,000/yr	\$0	\$200	\$0
(One) Small Donor Committee	\$40,000	\$15,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

* All limits are per election unless specified per year.

Assuming that we have translated the limits into this table correctly, in this form, we can clearly see that there are not seven kinds of entities, but two (above and below the dark line) with the exception of the highlighted limit of \$40,000/year that a state party committee could give to a legislative caucus

committee. The League sees no reason for that extraordinarily large limit that would favor legislative caucus committees. It probably should be \$0, since state party committees and legislative caucus committees have different purposes and governance.

Most of the limits are per election (primary and general), effectively doubled for a complete election cycle. However, some of the limits are per year, so for a two year election cycle, they may be considered as doubled, and for a four year election cycle, they may be considered as four times as much. So in this light, the per year limits become greatly exaggerated. The League would recommend lowering these yearly limits.

The League is not speaking to small donor committees that are for one candidate only and must go out of existence after each election. This is an entirely novel idea.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss these ideas.



Becky Gladstone
LWVOR President



Norman Turrill
LWVOR Governance Coordinator