



P.O. Box 331, Hudson Ohio

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February 14, 2022

Re: Campaign Contribution Limits Ordinance 226 Replacement

Dear Hudson City Council President Foster, Hudson City Council Members and Mayor Shubert,

The League of Women Voters Hudson (LWVH) are aware of the proposed repealing of the current Chapter 226 “Campaign Finance Reform” of the codified ordinances and enacting New Chapter 226 “Campaign Contribution Limits”. LWVH invites the Hudson City Council to review and consider our studies and established campaign finance reform positions in your deliberations regarding this new ordinance.

The League of Women Voters Hudson is an affiliate of League of Women Voters United States. We are a nonpartisan organization that does not support candidates or political parties. We are politically active in education, advocacy and lobbying. The League of Women Voters has a long history of Campaign Finance Reform advocacy under the LWVUS Positions and the 2016 League-wide Campaign for Making Democracy Work® that is likely to be readopted at our 2022 Convention.

One of the four pillars under LWV’s Making Democracy Work Program is Campaign Finance/Money in Politics. Highlighted points of this campaign include the following:

- The focus on politicians on representing each person equally regardless of their financial status.
- Reducing the influence of big money in our politics makes our elections fairer. This includes limiting the influence of SuperPACs to protect representative democracy.
- Increase in transparency in the funding of campaign. Voters have the right to know who is raising money for which political candidates, how much money they are raising, and how that money is being spent.
- Our elections should be free from corruption and undue influence and should work so that everyday Americans can run for office, even if they aren't well connected to wealthy special interests.

The League of Women Voters strongly advocates to reform money in politics in Congress, the executive branch, state legislatures, in local governance and, where appropriate, the courts. We are deeply committed to reforming our nation's campaign finance system to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably in public office, and allow maximum citizen participation in the political process. For more information and the full content of about this campaign, please see the attached Addendum taken from LWV US's Impact on Issues statement.

LWVH is very interested in the process to replace City ordinance 226.01 Campaign Finance Reform as well as the outcome.

Thank you for these considerations when deliberating this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carol L. O'Connell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carol L. O'Connell

President

League of Women Voters of Hudson



Addendum

Money in Politics

The League's Position Statement of Position on Campaign Finance, as announced by the National Board, April 2016:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should:

Enhance political equality for all citizens; ensure maximum participation by citizens in the political process; protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns; provide voters sufficient information about candidates and campaign issues to make informed choices; ensure transparency and the public's right to know who is using money to influence elections; enable 39 candidates to compete equitably for public office; ensure that candidates have sufficient funds to communicate their messages to the public; and combat corruption and undue influence in government.

The League believes that political corruption includes the following:

A candidate or officeholder agrees to vote or work in favor of a donor's interests in exchange for a campaign contribution; an officeholder or staff gives greater access to donors; an officeholder votes or works to support policies that reflect the preferences of individuals or organizations in order to attract contributions from them; a candidate or office holder seeks political contributions implying that there will be retribution unless a donation is given; and the results of the political process consistently favor the interests of significant campaign contributors.

In order to achieve the goals for campaign finance regulation, the League supports:

Public financing of elections, either voluntary or mandatory, in which candidates must abide by reasonable spending limits; enhanced enforcement of campaign finance laws that includes changes to ensure that regulatory agencies are properly funded, staffed, and structured to avoid partisan deadlock in the decision-making process; abolishing Super PACs and abolishing spending coordinated or directed by candidates (other than a candidate's own campaign

committee); and restrictions on direct donations and bundling by lobbyists, which may include monetary limits as well as other regulations.

Until full public financing of elections is enacted, limits on election spending are needed in order to meet the League's goals for protecting democratic processes. Among the different entities that spend money to influence elections, the League supports the following comparative limits:

- Higher spending limits for political parties, genuinely nonpartisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote organizations and activities, and candidates spending money raised from contributors.
- Mid-level spending limits for individual citizens (including wealthy individuals), Political Action Committees (with funds contributed by individuals associated with the sponsoring organization, such as employees, stockholders, members, and volunteers), and candidates spending their own money.
- Lower spending limits for trade associations, labor unions and nonprofit organizations from their general treasury funds.
- Severely restricted spending by for-profit organizations spending from their corporate treasury funds.
- No limits on spending by bona fide newspapers, television, and other media, including the internet, except to address partisan abuse or use of the media to evade campaign finance regulations.

This position is applicable to all federal campaigns for public office — presidential and congressional, primaries, as well as general elections. It also may be applied to state and local campaigns.

“Impact on Issues 2020-2022: A Guide to Public Policy Positions” published by the League of Women Voters. Available on line from LWLVUS at <https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/LWV-impact-2020.pdf>