

Martinez, Ruben

From: Robb, Denise M <denise.munro@pierce.edu>
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 10:11 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Agenda Item 11

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Dear City of Pasadena,

I wanted to submit my comment re Agenda Item 11 having no contribution limits. We already have way too much money in politics and with dark money and the *Citizens United* decision, the wealthy and large corporations now give unlimited and anonymous contributions at the state and federal level making their outsize influence even larger. Please don't let this happen to Pasadena. Don't use this loophole to destroy democracy.

Sincerely,
Denise Robb, Ph.D.

Denise Munro Robb, Ph.D.
Professor of Political Science
Pierce College

10/04/2021
Item 11

Martinez, Ruben

From: John Doyle <[redacted]>
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 11:41 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: 11 - Limits on Campaign Contributions

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Dear Council Members,

I strongly urge the city to reject the Ordinance Codifying No Limits on Campaign Contributions" (Agenda Item # 11 on Oct 4, 2021.)

I am running for city council in District 4 and welcome a more transparent and level playing field. It is not because I am a challenger, it is because I would rather people listen to the content of each candidate's vision for the city versus how many ads the candidate can purchase in the media. Pasadena is a small city with big problems and we need multi-faceted candidates willing to roll up their sleeves to solve problems as opposed to one trick ponies producing more of the same, which is why the city has not been able to diversify its revenue base and create a stronger middle class in the last decade.

The social safety net is rapidly eroding in Pasadena and we need to work together before it gets worse. Single issue large donations create an environment where it is difficult for the candidate receiving those donations to seek compromise on complex issues.

Best,

John

--

John Doyle

Doyle for City Council 2024

District 4 - Pasadena, CA

M: [redacted]

10/04/2021
Item 11

Martinez, Ruben

From: ellen.finkelpearl <ellen.finkelpearl@pasadenacalifornia.gov>
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 2:58 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: comment on Agenda Item #11 for Today (October 4) city council meeting

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I strongly urge the City Council to reject the "Ordinance Codifying No Limits on Campaign Contributions" (Agenda Item #11 of the October 4, 2021 meeting). Why, at a time when we are all increasingly aware of the pernicious influence of money in politics, has the City Council decided to codify the practice of putting no limits on contributions? Last year, citizens in the City of Alhambra voted overwhelmingly (over 76%) to limit local campaign contributions to \$250 per contributing entity (Measure V). The reasons are clear: such limits prevent undue influence or the appearance of influence on councilmembers accepting large donations. Limits level the playing-field, allowing more citizens to run for city council, to create wider representation of the populace. Limits keep campaigning within reasonable parameters and allow for transparency and clean elections. I urge you to turn down this undemocratic ordinance and instead to codify limits like those of Alhambra.

Ellen Finkelpearl

Pasadena 91104

10/04/2021
Item 11

Martinez, Ruben

From: Una Lee Jost
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 3:34 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse; Gordo, Victor; Masuda, Gene
Subject: 2021-10-04 Pasadena City Council Meeting - Public Comment - Agenda Item #11

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Dear Pasadena Mayor Gordo and City Councilmembers:

Greetings. I'm Una Lee Jost, long-time resident of Pasadena in District 4, local school advocate, and PUSD parent.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment on Agenda Item #11.

As a September 2017 Harvard-funded study concluded, the U.S. government has been captured by those who represent the interests of powerful business organizations and a small number of affluent Americans, who have the ability to exert influence on elected officials through large contributions to their candidate campaigns.

(<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.hbs.edu%2Fcompetitiveness%2FDocument%2Fwhy-competition-in-the-politics-industry-is-failing-america.pdf&data=04%7C01%7Crumartinez%40cityofpasadena.net%7Cbaae7025518a40c7442408d9878721cf%7C82d9fc002c664402a28fc6bcd32e491%7C1%7C0%7C637689837657914569%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoIMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=FIeHOGdpx3WNQIbImfoAFZ6xLAAs2H6T5%2BcPPHgDtiM%3D&reserved=0>)

It's for this reason I'm appreciative of Proposition 208 passed by California voters in 1996, resulting in current campaign contribution limits to state candidates during an election of \$4,700 per contributor, helping to shift incentives for candidates to respond to constituents, instead of donors.

I'm also pleased the California Legislature passed Assembly Bill 571 establishing default campaign contribution limits for county and city candidates at the same level as the limit on contributions for state candidates, effective January 1, 2021. This bill permits a county or city to establish its own contribution limits, which would prevail over these default limits.

(https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fleginfo.ca.gov%2Ffaces%2FbillAnalysisClient.xhtml%3Fbill_id%3D201920200AB571&data=04%7C01%7Crumartinez%40cityofpasadena.net%7Cbaae7025518a40c7442408d9878721cf%7C82d9fc002c664402a28fc6bcd32e491%7C1%7C0%7C637689837657914569%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoIMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=heM2B0YGDLaYnDShJxEjkZgRJ9WqyFuqqK8iloULNgE%3D&reserved=0)

In adopting AB 571, the California Legislature considered that:

- Many local contributions exceed the size of contributions allowed for state elected officials, and that in some cases, candidates may be dependent on just a few large donors to fund their campaigns; and
- Very large contributions can damage the public's trust in the democratic process by deepening the perception or the possibility that candidates will be more responsive to their financial backers than to their constituents.

I was dismayed then to learn the Council pushed back against AB 571 by voting on August 16 to remove any limit to local campaign financial contributions, and that Councilmember Rivas was the lone dissent vote.

(https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pasadenanow.com%2Fmain%2Fcity-council-pushes-back-against-state-law-curtailling-campaign-contributions-removes-limits&data=04%7C01%7Crumartinez%40cityofpasadena.net%7Cabae7025518a40c7442408d9878721cf%7C82d9fc002c664402a28fc6bcd32e491%7C1%7C0%7C637689837657914569%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoIMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ikl1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=aCkRDnztJEIc4srF7ZcEWSJyrW9IDW al613VAyJH8Dg%3D&reserved=0)

The influence of big money in politics has led to the gap between the very rich and everyone else, wider than at any time since the 1920s.

Pasadena is not immune from the issue of wealth and income inequality, and is in fact, one of California's most unequal cities.

(https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pasadenaweekly.com%2F2019%2F01%2F24%2Fa-critical-look-at-

&data=04%7C01%7Crumartinez%40cityofpasadena.net%7Cabae7025518a40c7442408d9878721cf%7C82d9fc002c664402a28fc6bcd32e491%7C1%7C0%7C637689837657924508%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoIMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ikl1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=2L89EBWkrWxQQ7Vk0hUvKdCLJkUpox%2FiSe7yW5rJPaw%3D&reserved=0

what-makes-pasadena-such-an-unequal-place-to-live)

To restore public trust in the the City's democratic process, I urge the Council to rescind its prior vote to codify no dollar limits on campaign contributions to city candidates; or place a dollar limit lower than the state's default limits.

For the sake of the welfare of PUSD children and future generations, I urge the Council to set an example and lead the way in removing the inherent conflicts of interest that arise when candidates may be dependent on just a few large donors to fund their campaign. Doing so would help engender trust in our City's leaders and candidates.

Thank you.