



September 20, 2017

The Hon. Jodi Remke, Chair
Hon. Members
California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC)
1102 Q Street, Suite 3000
Sacramento, CA 95811
CommAsst@fppc.ca.gov

Dear Chair Remke and Members:

We support the legal position of the FPPC in the lower court in *Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association v. Edmund Brown, et al.*, and support the Commission appealing the adverse decision.

There is no case law supporting the lower court's central holding that Proposition 73 silently amended the very purposes of the PRA. We agree with the FPPC's and Attorney General's briefing that the structure of the Act and Proposition 73 lead to the conclusion that the ban was subject to legislative amendment to further the Act's fundamental goal of protecting the integrity of our elections.¹ As such, we think this decision calls for appellate judicial review.

There is a strong desire among Americans and Californians for systemic campaign finance reform. According to a recent poll, more than 80% of Americans of *all* political stripes believe money has too much influence in political campaigns and 85% want to see fundamental changes to our campaign finance system.² Reflecting this, SB 1107 was passed by a *bipartisan*, two-thirds vote. As we talked with legislators in the Assembly and Senate, we heard from both Republicans and Democrats a real desire to allow local governments to shape reasonable campaign finance laws that would promote greater accountability and responsiveness to constituents.

Senate Bill 1107 was supported by almost 40 organizations, representing a broad cross-section of California, including good government organizations like Common Cause and the League of Women Voters; business and labor organizations like the Los Angeles County Labor Federation, the UFCW Western States Council, and the American Sustainable Business Council; local governments like Alameda and Contra Costa Counties; civil rights organizations like the ACLU and Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project; and faith organizations like California Council of Churches, Church Impact.

¹ See *Johnson v. Bradley*, 4 Cal.4th 389, 410 (1992) ("it seems obvious that public money reduces rather than increases the fund raising pressures on public office seekers and thereby reduces the undue influence of special interest groups") (approvingly quoting lower court).

² New York Times, *Americans' Views on Money in Politics* (June 2, 2015).

Thank you for guarding the Legislature's power to refine and improve the Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathay Feng". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Kathay Feng
Executive Director
California Common Cause

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Helen L. Hutchison". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, horizontal flourish at the end.

Helen Hutchison
President
League of Women Voters of California

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Rusch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, horizontal flourish at the end.

Emily Rusch
Executive Director
California Public Interest Research Group