

February 2022
The Virginia General Assembly
1000 Bank Street
Richmond, VA 23219



RE: Virginia Campaign Finance Reform

Dear Legislators,

Surveys show that nearly 80% of Virginians, irrespective of their party affiliations, support reducing money from big campaign donors. Meanwhile, small and medium-sized business owners complain that big money and special interests suppress product innovation and market competition, creating more monopolistic entities than ever before. In fact, 85% of business leaders believe that our campaign finance system is broken and action needs to be taken to repair it.

In 2020, Virginia was ranked 46 out of 50 in the S.W.A.M.P Index, a cross -state comparative analysis of transparency and accountability. We are one of only five states which has no limits on campaign contributions and limited regulatory oversight over money coming into our elections. 30 years ago, the 1994 “Campaign Finance Reform, Government Accountability, and Ethics Study” initiated by Governor Wilder, recommended a campaign finance reform agenda which included campaign contribution limits, campaign finance reporting, including computerization, and a new state ethics commission. Governor Wilder reaffirmed the need for campaign finance reform in Virginia in a recent blog.

Virginians feel that it is now time to address campaign finance reform and the perceived corrosive effects that “pay-to-play” has on our legislative process. A systematic reform of our campaign finance systems which makes transparent the money flowing into our state politics can only serve to make legislators more accountable to voters and serve as an important step in restoring people’s trust in government. A recent Citizens Report on the Need for Campaign Finance Reform in Virginia outlined a sequenced roadmap for reform for Virginia through:

1. Strengthening transparency and accountability by enhancing disclosure, establishing regular auditing, creating and implementing guidelines for complaints, restricting personal use of campaign funds, and establishing the requisite institutional authority, capacity, and budget in the State Board of Elections which is responsible for campaign finance oversight.
2. Promoting integrity through fair play by establishing limits on campaign contributions, introducing public financing of elections, and enabling the state legislature to explicitly support the passage of an amendment to the U.S. Constitution authorizing states to regulate campaign spending.

We hope that members of our General Assembly will take this opportunity to pass vital campaign finance reform legislation and make Virginia’s government fairer and more representative of voters.

[Citizens Report on the Need for Campaign Finance Reform in Virginia](#)

Sincerely,

VaOurWay & The Virginia Chapter of American Promise

Together with the following organizations:

MoneyOutVA

NETWORK for Social Justice

Indivisible Virginia

Virginia Political Cooperative

Vienna Neighbors United

Network NOVA

Center for Common Ground

We of Action (WofA)

UnKoch My Campus

Activate Virginia

Herndon Huddle

Virginia Democratic Arab American Forum

Progressive Democrats of America

ARTivism in Virginia

LWCC

Grassroots Alexandria

End Citizens United

Let America Vote Action Fund

Virginia Justice Democrats

Virginia Democracy Forward (VADF)

Women Marchers of West Springfield

Public Citizen

Maginniss + del Ninno Architects

Sierra Club Virginia Chapter

Virginia Organizing

Virginia Coalition for Human Rights

Indivisible Charlottesville

Powered by Facts

Our Revolution Falls Church

Green New Deal VA Coalition

Loudoun Climate Project

Our Revolution Northern Virginia

