



September 11, 2019

**VIA Email to Author and the Office of the Governor**

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor of California  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
ATTN: Legislative Unit

**Re: AB 571 (Mullin) – Political Reform Act of 1974: contribution limits – SUPPORT**

Dear Governor Newsom:

**The League of Women Voters of California writes to support AB 571 (Mullin)**, which establishes a default limit of \$4,700 for contributions to candidates running for local elected city and county offices in jurisdictions that have not adopted their own contribution limits.

The League of Women Voters believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should enhance political equality for all citizens, ensure transparency and the public's right to know who is using money to influence elections, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office, and allow maximum citizen participation in the political process. We support realistic limits on contributions by individuals and groups to candidates.

While existing law allows California counties and cities to limit the size of campaign contributions, considerably less than a third do so. For example, a recent study by California Common Cause found that 78 percent of California cities have no limit on campaign contributions. Moreover, many local contributions exceed the size of contributions allowed for state elected officials, and in some cases, candidates may be dependent on just a few large donors to fund their campaigns. 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.

This bill would establish a realistic default limit on contributions in local campaigns, set at the same level as for state legislative campaigns. It would not affect jurisdictions that have adopted their own local contribution limits and would not prevent a local government from adopting a higher or lower limit.

AB 571 strengthens representative democracy and curbs potential corruption and undue influence while preserving local governments' flexibility to set limits that suit their communities. We respectfully urge you to sign this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol Moon Goldberg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carol Moon Goldberg  
President