

HONEST ELECTIONS MULTNOMAH COUNTY

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Multnomah County Circuit Court to Hear Challenges
to Multnomah County's Campaign Finance Reform Measure 26-184,
Enacted by Vote of 89-11% in 2016

On August 15 at 9 a.m., Judge Eric Bloch of the Multnomah County Circuit Court will conduct a 2-hour hearing on challenges to the constitutionality of the campaign finance reform Amendment to the Multnomah County Charter (Measure 26-184) approved by the voters of the county by a margin of 89% "yes" to 11% "no" at the November 2016 election.

Tuesday, August 15 9:00 a.m.
Multnomah County Courthouse, Room 508
1021 SW 4th Avenue
Portland, OR

Judge Bloch will decide whether the measure is constitutional in Oregon. His decision may be appealed to the Oregon Court of Appeals and Oregon Supreme Court. The Multnomah County Commission asked for this "validation proceeding" and filed briefs on behalf of the county's voters, calling for the Court to uphold the constitutionality of all aspects of Measure 26-184.

The challengers are associations of corporations: Associated Oregon Industries, Portland Business Association, and the Portland Metro Realtors Association, along with its former President, Alan Mehrwein. The Taxpayers Association of Oregon is also attempting to participate, after having filed its petition to intervene 38 days after the close of the statutory filing deadline. These challengers assert that they wish to continue to make unlimited political contributions and expenditures, without identifying themselves in the ads they fund.

The Taxpayers Association of Oregon is actually acting as a local front for the Center for Competitive Politics, a Virginia nonprofit corporation financially supported by the Koch brothers.

Measure 26-184 amended the Multnomah County Home Rule Charter to:

1. Require that each Communication (defined) to voters related to a Multnomah County Candidate Election prominently disclose the five largest true original sources of funding for the Communication, if any of them exceed \$500.
2. Limit contributions to support or oppose candidates for public office in Multnomah County elections to \$500 per person or political committee.
3. Require any entity that spends more than \$750 per election cycle on independent expenditures to register as a political committee, which requires reporting of the sources of its funding.
4. Limit independent expenditures in any Multnomah County candidate race to:
 - \$5,000 per individual
 - \$10,000 per political committee, but only from contributions by individuals of \$500 or less per year.
5. Allow formation of Small Donor Committees, which may accept contributions only in amounts of \$100 or less per person per year. Such committees can then support or oppose candidates without limit.

"We believe that all of the features of Measure 26-184 are constitutional," said David Delk of the Alliance for Democracy and Honest Elections Multnomah County, the group that spearheaded the campaign for Measure 26-184. Mr Delk is also one of the parties in the validation proceeding.