

August 13, 2018

**VIA E-Mail**

The Honorable Chair Alice T. Germond and Commissioners  
Fair Political Practices Commission  
1102 Q Street, Suite 3000,  
Sacramento CA 95811  
[CommAsst@fppc.ca.gov](mailto:CommAsst@fppc.ca.gov)

**RE: AB 84 (Mullin) - The Political Reform Act of 1974: political party committee disclosures OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED**

Dear Chair Germond and Commissioners:

The League of Women Voters of California urges the California Fair Political Practices Commission to stand with us, and other good government groups, and **oppose AB 84**. The bill would contravene fundamental tenets of the Political Reform Act by corrupting the political process and unfairly favoring incumbents.

**Insufficient Opportunity for Public Review.** AB 84 could significantly impact the Political Reform Act's carefully crafted campaign finance system. Transparency and the opportunity for meaningful consideration by stakeholders is essential. Unfortunately, the bill's entirely new language was introduced at the eleventh hour as a "gut and amend" bill, and has largely circumvented public scrutiny.

**Potential for Increased Campaign Spending.** The bill would allow legislative caucus committees, directed by each of the four caucus leaders, to operate as political party committees. The leaders, individually subject to campaign contribution limits of \$4,400, would be allowed to accept up to \$36,500 per year, per contributor, on behalf of their caucus. A state candidate enjoying the caucus' support could receive **unlimited cash** from these new war chests. AB 84 opens new avenues for the influx of campaign money, increasing the potential for big spending by special interests.

**Distortions to the Political Process.** The League is opposed to policies that protect incumbents and incentives that interfere with the motivation to act in the public interest. AB 84 favors incumbents by concentrating fundraising with current office holders. Furthermore, by giving each caucus financial power over its members, the bill could induce legislators to fall into step with the caucus – even where positions might differ from the interests of constituents.

**Damages the Public's Trust in Government.** Representative democracy depends on putting the interests of ordinary people ahead of the donor class. When big-money, special interests are given even more influence over California's law and policy, it fuels the public's belief that voting in our elections is a pointless, futile exercise.

**Support for Increased Disclosure.** The League supports AB 84's modest expansion of reporting requirements for political party committees.

For the aforementioned reasons, the **League of Women Voters of California opposes AB 84 unless amended to include *only* the expanded reporting requirements**. We ask the FPPC to oppose the bill as well.

Sincerely,



Helen L. Hutchison  
President

cc: Philip Ung, Director of Legislation and External Affairs, [pung@fppc.ca.gov](mailto:pung@fppc.ca.gov)