

Suggested statement on COG fund drive

Here in Washington State we have already taken a long step toward electoral reform, particularly in relation to disclosure of campaign contributions and conflicts of interest. That step was the passage of Initiative 276 last November.

Its support was bi-partisan. Republican legislators such as Rep. John Rabel, Rep. Art Brown and Rep. Scott Blair were in the forefront of its development and passage.

It isn't surprising that it was immediately challenged, nor is it necessarily without advantage, since it means the law will have been tested when it becomes operative.

The backers of the initiative have launched a drive for funds to continue to retain the services of private attorneys who represent private citizens and groups defending the initiative against the court challenges. Since the initiative provides certain powers for private citizens they do have a concern which is apart from that of elected officials, even the Attorney General, who office has had primary responsibility for representing the people of the state in these actions.

The fund drive, more importantly, is a test of how committed the people of this state really are to full disclosure in campaign financing. I think they are committed. I hope they'll forward contributions.

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