



1411 K Street, NW, Suite 1400 · Washington, DC 20005  
tel (202) 736-2200 · fax (202) 736-2222  
[www.campaignlegalcenter.org](http://www.campaignlegalcenter.org)

April 13, 2016

The Honorable Ben Allen  
State Capitol, Room 2054  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 1107 – accountable elections – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Allen,

On behalf of the Campaign Legal Center, I am writing to support Senate Bill 1107, which would restore control to local governments and the state to enact new options for election campaign funding. This bill would be an important first step in allowing local jurisdictions or the state to enact public financing programs. Six California charter cities already have public financing programs, but current state law bans counties, districts, general law cities, and the state from offering public campaign funds. It is time to allow the rest of the citizens of California to determine how their state and local campaigns will be financed.

Since California voters enacted the historic Political Reform Act in 1974, California has been a leader in its efforts to respond to changing circumstances and amend its laws to enact meaningful campaign finance and election laws. In 2014, the state amended its disclosure laws in an effort to shine light on the underlying sources of dark money flowing into the state. Most recently, the state enacted an automatic voter registration law to remove barriers in the registration process and encourage greater electoral participation. These recent examples demonstrate the state's commitment to core democratic values of widespread participation in the electoral process and providing transparency as to who is trying to influence that process.

When it comes to options for financing campaigns, however, California lags behind. Most California jurisdictions are foreclosed from instituting public financing programs. The state is therefore limited in how it can address one of the biggest problems facing our country today: how campaigns are financed and who has influence in our elections. Public financing programs increase civic engagement by encouraging everyday citizens to participate in the financing of campaigns and well-designed public financing programs can create incentives for candidates to raise funds from more than just those who can afford to give the maximum amount.

SB 1107 would not enact public financing, but would simply remove the ban and permit local governments or the state, if they so choose, to create public financing programs. It is time to allow Californians to make that decision and decide how their campaigns will be financed.

The Campaign Legal Center strongly supports SB 1107 and we urge its expeditious passage.  
Thank you for your leadership on this important bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CH Kelley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Catherine Hinckley Kelley  
State & Local Reform Program Director