

Initiative Petition 23RCF2

An Act Limiting Contributions to
Campaigns

Before the House and Senate State Affairs
Committees

April 16, 2026

What Prompted the Initiative?



In 2021, a federal court ruled that Alaska's lower than average campaign contribution limits unconstitutionally restricted free speech. Accordingly, it struck down all limits in Alaska. This leaves Alaska's elections vulnerable to unlimited contributions on state elections by wealthy donors and having no limit magnifies the influence that these wealthy individuals have over elected officials.



When money is speech, the average citizen's voice can be easily drowned out. Alaskans need to set reasonable limits on campaign finance.



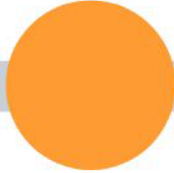
History of Alaska's Political Contribution Limits

Legislature
1974

\$1000

Alaska Legislature establishes first limits on campaign contributions

Ballot Initiative
1995



Citizens begin an initiative to lower limit to \$500 and restrict all out of state donations

Legislature
1996

\$500

Legislature acts pre-emptively to the citizen's initiative and reduce limits to \$500

Legislature
2003

\$1000

Legislature raises limit to \$1,000

Ballot Initiative
2006

\$500

Citizens' Initiative passes with 73% support, lowering limit to \$500

APOC 2021

\$1500

9th Circuit Court rules Alaska's limits unconstitutionally low. APOC responds with an Advisory Opinion recommending \$1,500 limit

Today

No
Limits

APOC votes down staff advisory opinion, resulting in no contribution limits. APOC calls on the Legislature to act.

Thompson v. Hebdon

- **Plaintiffs sued** challenging Alaska's political contribution limits and aggregate out-of-state limits.
- **The District Court and Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals initially upheld the individual limits** as a "sufficiently important state interest" and "closely drawn" to that end but ruled the out-of-state contribution limits were unconstitutional.
- **The U.S. Supreme Court remanded this decision back to the Ninth Circuit** to reconsider their decision. They urged the Ninth Circuit to apply the "five factor test" in the *Randall v. Sorrell* (2006) decision which ruled Vermont's \$400 contribution limit unconstitutional.
- In 2021, **the Ninth Circuit struck down Alaska's statutory political contribution limits** on the basis that they were too low and had not been adjusted for inflation since initially implemented.

Contribution Limits Initiative Overview

- **Reinstates Fair, Reasonable, and Constitutional Contribution Limits** - Reinstates campaign contribution limits enacted by Alaskan voters. These limits based on the 2006 limits adjusted for inflation and the new two-year campaign period.
- **Establishes Per Campaign Period Limits** - Moves Alaska's campaign contribution limits to a "per campaign" limit, instead of a "per year" basis. This ensures candidates, regardless of when they enter the race, are on the same playing field with the same limits.
- **Index Limits for Inflation** - Updates Alaska's limits for campaign contributions to ensure amounts are constitutional and remain so in perpetuity. This requires the Alaska Public Offices Commission (APOC) to index political contribution limits every ten years based on inflation, beginning in 2031.

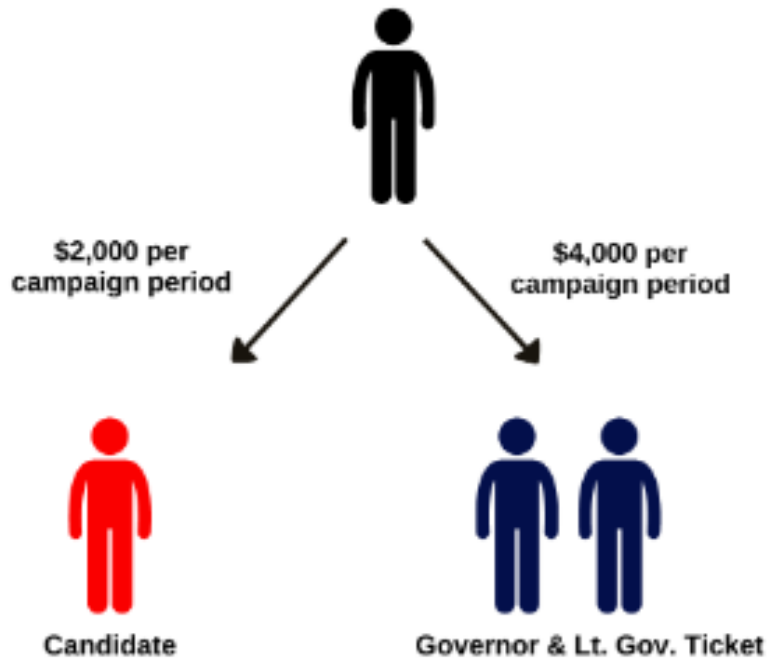
Contribution Limit Initiative Overview

Category	Old Limits	New Limits (Per campaign = 2 fundraising years)
Individual-to-candidate limits	\$500 per year (~\$723*)	\$2,000 per campaign
Group-to-candidate, group, or non-group	\$1,000 per year (~\$1,450*)	\$4,000 per campaign
Individual to joint campaign for Gov. & Lt. Gov	\$1,000 per year (~\$1,450*)	\$4,000 per campaign

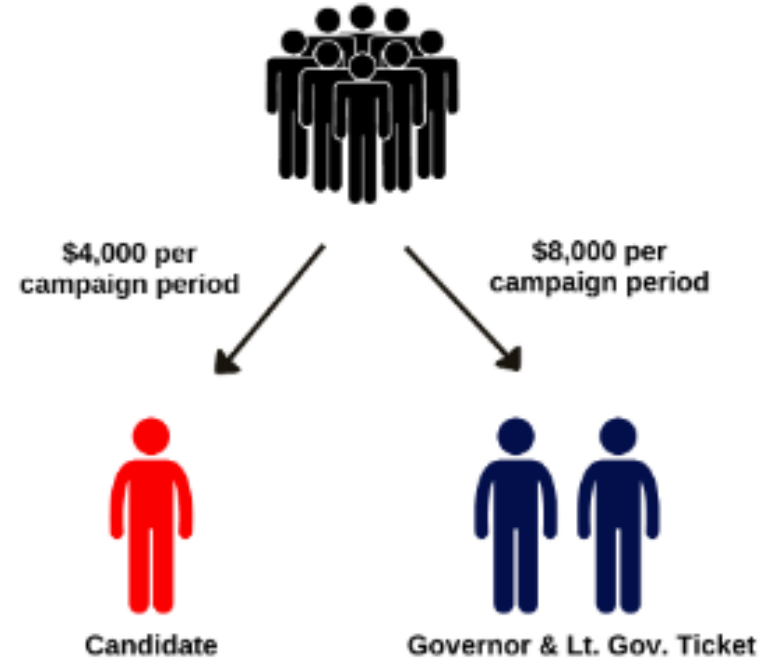
*Previous limits adjusted for inflation based on 2022 CPI data from the Alaska Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development

Initiative's Contribution Limits

Individual Donation Limits



Group and Non-Group Donation Limits



Constitutionality of New Limits

Applying the “five factor test” from the *Randall v. Sorrell* decision

2006 Limits

Ballot Measure
2023

Does the limit significantly restrict the amount of funding available for challengers to run competitive campaigns? → This initiative meets this factor by increasing limits and moving to a per campaign basis.	Yes	No
Are the political parties subject to the same low limits as individuals?	No	No
Are volunteer services counted toward contribution limits?	No	No
Are the limits indexed for inflation? → This initiative meets this factor by indexing for inflation every ten years.	No	Yes
Is there a special justification for a uniquely low limit? → This initiative adjusts campaign contribution limits above amounts previously upheld so that special justification is no longer required.	No	NA

Current Status in the Second Regular Session of the 34th Alaska Legislature (2026)

- ▶ Article XI, Section 4 of the Alaska Constitution requires the lieutenant governor to place the initiative on the ballot “for the first statewide election held more than one hundred twenty days after adjournment of the legislative session following the filing”. However, “if before the election, substantially the same measure has been enacted, the petition is void.”
- ▶ HB 16, mirroring the initiative, passed the House as CSHB 16(STA) on April 28, 2025
- ▶ CSHB 16 (STA) was read for the third time and returned to the senate rules committee on May 20, 2025