

Alaska House of Representatives

Representative Calvin Schrage

Co-Chair: House Finance Committee

Session:

Alaska State Capitol

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Proudly serving our friends and neighbors in the Abbott Loop - Lower Hillside Community

House Bill 16 - version A

Sponsor Statement

"An Act amending campaign contribution limits for state and local office; directing the Alaska Public Offices Commission to adjust campaign contribution limits for state and local office once each decade beginning in 2031; and relating to campaign contribution reporting requirements."

In 2024, Alaska 23RCF2 was certified after a grassroots effort that gathered nearly signatures from 30,000 registered Alaskan voters and met the 7% threshold in 32 out of Alaska's 40 house districts. 23RCF2 will be put before voters in the 2026 elections if the Alaska Legislature does not pass materially similar legislation. HB16 mirrors 23RCF2.

Alaska has historically touted some of the strongest, most effective campaign finance laws in the nation which served to promote better accountability and trust in our elections and elected officials. In recent years, Alaskans have shown their support for fair and reasonable contribution limits, including a 2006 ballot initiative that passed overwhelmingly with 73% support. But, in 2021, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals struck down Alaska's statutory campaign contribution limits, opening our state and local elections to the threat of unlimited political contributions directly to candidates from anyone, anywhere in the country.

House Bill 16 reinstates fair, reasonable, and constitutional campaign contribution limits adjusted based on Alaska's consumer price index rates moving forward, ensuring these limits remain constitutional.

To accomplish this, House Bill 36 does the following:

- Moves Alaska's campaign contributions to a "per election cycle" basis.
- Increases the statutory individual-to-candidate limit from \$500 per year to \$2,000 per election cycle and the group-to-candidate limit from \$1,000 per year to \$4,000 per election cycle.
- Directs the Alaska Public Offices Commission to adjust contribution limits for inflation.

These changes address the concerns laid out by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and United States Supreme Court precedent while upholding the expressed desire of Alaskan voters for fair and reasonable contribution limits and transparency in our elections.

February 3, 2025