



March 26, 2025

To: House State Affairs Committee

From: Mercedes Arciniega, Outreach & Good Government Lead, AKPIRG

RE: Letter of Support for House Bill 16

Chair Carrick, Vice-Chair Story, and Members of the Committee:

The Alaska Public Interest Research Group (AKPIRG) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit and the only non-governmental public interest and consumer advocacy organization in Alaska. We work to ensure accountable and accessible government, inclusive public services, and a sustainable, people-centered economy.

AKPIRG appreciates the efforts of the House State Affairs Committee to consider House Bill 16 - Campaign Finance, Contribution Limits - which would establish campaign contribution limits for state and local offices. We support the bill, which levels the playing field for Alaskan voices and fortifies the integrity of Alaska's election system. This legislation is a critical step in ensuring that our democratic process remains accessible, equitable, and free from the outsized influence of wealthy special interests.

Under current APOC rules, Alaska lacks limits on individual contributions to candidates, out-of-state donations, and individual-to-group contributions,¹ leaving state and local elections vulnerable to unrestricted and external funding. Without limits on these political contributions, our election system is unprotected from corruption.

Alaska has a strong history of prioritizing financial equity in our election system, with voters overwhelmingly approving a 2006 ballot initiative to establish a \$500 cap on individual contributions to candidates and groups. AKPIRG was proud to support this effort and stands with the 73% of Alaskans who voted in favor of strong contribution limits. This decisive support reflects a shared belief in fair and transparent elections. After these voter-approved limits were overturned in *Thompson v. Hebdon*, the Alaska Public Offices Commission (APOC) "implored" the Legislature to act, emphasizing the need to align state campaign finance law with the will of Alaska voters.² Passing HB 16 is an opportunity to uphold this mandate and ensure state law reflects the values and priorities of the people.

The fair and constitutional contribution limits proposed in HB 16 are long-lasting. The provision adjusting limits every ten years to account for inflation maintains their relevance and effectiveness over time. By preventing contribution caps from becoming obsolete or overly

¹ [AS 15.13](#)

² [AO 21-09](#)

restrictive, this measure makes certain that Alaska's campaign finance system remains both fair and sustainable well into the future. Passing HB 16 is not just about addressing current concerns—it's about creating a long-term framework that upholds the integrity of our elections for years to come.

We urge the legislature to pass HB 16 and House State Affairs to move this legislation out of committee.

Thank you for considering our input. AKPIRG is available for further discussion on this legislation and other bills related to Alaska's public interest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mercedes Arcinaga', written in a cursive style.

Mercedes Arcinaga

Outreach & Good Government Lead, AKPIRG

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Veri di Suvero', written in a cursive style.

Veri di Suvero

Executive Director, AKPIRG