

FROM THE DESK OF

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Dear Friend:

Prop. 89 is an initiative that may have begun with the best of intentions, but ended up with unfortunate and potentially devastating consequences for working men and women and for the Democratic Party.

While many of our members support the idea of publicly-financed campaigns, Prop. 89 goes far beyond that goal, cutting critical groups and allies out of the process. This initiative is 55 pages long and wrought with unintended consequences and dangerous risks we can't afford to take. There's no denying that there are problems with the current system – but while Prop. 89 claims to be about “clean” money, all it does is make an even bigger mess.

As always, the devil is in the details. For example:

- **Prop. 89 marginalizes the Democratic Party, severely limiting its ability to elect Democrats.** The initiative limits party contributions to candidates and Independent Expenditures to \$7,500, making it impossible to raise “candidate money” or to run issue ads.
- **Prop. 89 undercuts what the Democratic Party does best: member-to-member communications.** Democrats have always made member communications a top priority – but Prop. 89 would take away that advantage because it severely limits member-to-member programs for candidates.
- **Prop. 89 hurts the Democratic Majority.** This initiative gives Republicans in non-competitive seats a new financial edge. For example, a Republican running in what was formerly a safe Democratic Senate Seat could receive \$1.3 million in taxpayer funds to run his campaign. Do we really want to give the Republican Party a whole new source of revenue and eliminate safe Democratic districts?
- **This initiative does nothing to stop wealthy individuals from contributing whatever they please in their own campaigns or to ballot measures.** This means there would be no stopping candidates like Steve Poizner or any other rich Republican from buying millions in campaign advertising with their own money, while restricting the contributions received by all other candidates. It also means that wealthy conservative activists like Tim Draper, the former voucher proponent, would be able to launch campaigns with unlimited funds, while labor unions would have to abide by campaign limits.

- **Prop. 89 creates an unlevel playing field, attempting to SHUT OUT certain groups from the political process, like small businesses and some labor unions and non-profits.** In the past, labor unions have opposed unfairly excluding selected groups from the political process, and Prop. 89 is no different – it creates two sets of rules.
- **Non-profit organizations that receive any donation from any business would have to limit their contribution to any ballot measure to \$10,000...**the same contribution limit that applies to business corporations.
- **Any union which operates a small business, like a print shop or a production studio, will be unfairly restricted from the political process just like the big corporations.**
- **The ACLU has challenged a similar law limiting Independent Expenditures in Connecticut, saying it:** “improperly tilts the playing field in favor of participating candidates in a way that breaches the government’s obligation to remain neutral.” Legal experts say the disparity is even greater under Prop. 89.

The fact is, Prop. 89 is not the reform we hoped it would be – it’s time to go back to the drawing board and talk about real solutions for our campaign system. This measure is unnecessarily complicated and full of unintended consequences. Please join us and other members of the Democratic Party in voting No, or staying neutral, on Prop. 89.

Sincerely,



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