



Democracy Reform Oregon

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Accessible politics, accountable government

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Checkbook Democracy? Loren Parks Contributes Nearly 3/4ths of Total Cash to 2008 Initiatives, All to Walker, Sizemore, and Mannix Initiatives

Loren Parks has contributed almost \$1.1 million to ten initiatives filed by conservative activists Russell Walker, Bill Sizemore, and Kevin Mannix, exceeding his past record domination of signature gathering fundraising.

Chart 1 – Top Contributors to Initiative Committees

Contributor	Contribution	% of total contributions	Contributions by initiative (descriptions and chief petitioners in chart 2)
Loren Parks	\$1,086,000 (\$540,500 to six Sizemore initiatives)	73%	IP 2 - \$12,000 – only contributor
			IP 3 - \$122,500 – only contributor
			IP 19 - \$123,000 – only contributor
			IP 20 - \$121,000 – only contributor
			IP 25 - \$125,000 – only contributor
			IP 32 - \$37,000 – only contributor
			IP 40 - \$122,500 –96% of total
			IP 41 - \$173,000 –97% of total
			IP 51 - \$125,000 –93% of total
			IP 53 - \$125,000 –93% of total
Hire Calling Public Affairs (Richard Wendt)	\$275,000	19%	IP 21 - \$175,000 – only contributor
			IP 78 - \$100,000 – only contributor
Mariposa LLC	\$52,291	4%	IP 37 - \$52,291 – only contributor
Kevin L. Mannix, PC	\$30,017	2%	IP 40 - \$5,500 –4% of total
			IP 41 - \$5,500 –3% of total
			IP 51 - \$3,700 –3% of total
			IP 53 - \$3,700 – 3% of total
Contributions ≤\$100	\$20,198	1%	IP 54 - \$11,617 –87% of total
			IP 54 - \$180 – 1.4% of total
			IP 61 – 10,994 – 100% of total
Other Contributions	\$23,471	2%	IP 109 - \$9,024 – 48% of total
			IP 51 and 53 - \$3,000 each from NW Physicians and Doctors Company PAC – 2% of each total
			IP 54 - \$1,500 from Salem Golf Club –11% of total
			IP 109 - \$9,967 from 14 donors-52% of total
Total	\$1,486,977*	100%	

Based on campaign finance disclosure reports filed by 9/0/07 with the Secretary of State. Figures may include cash and in-kind contributions as well as loans and could change due to auditing or amendments. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

* Total contributions in this analysis doesn't include fundraising by the First Class Solution committee since their expenditures were not for petition signature gathering but rather contributions to Republican candidates during the 2006 general election.

In 2002, Parks gave over \$300,000 to three initiative campaigns, and has a history of giving frequently to conservative candidates and measures in Oregon. Parks is giving even more money to a broader range of initiatives aimed for the 2008 ballot. His contributions of \$1,086,000 are 73 percent, or almost one out of every four dollars, given thus far for signature gathering efforts. (See chart 1.) Parks, who now lives in Nevada, is the owner of an Oregon-based medical equipment company.

“Ballot measure politics are typically dominated by big donors,” said Janice Thompson, executive director of Democracy Reform Oregon. “But this level of giving by Loren Parks to signature gathering efforts is so high that the populist originators of the initiative process are probably rolling over in their graves.”

Chart 2 – Total Contributions, Subject, Chief Petitioners, and Major Contributors

IP #	Subject/Chief Petitioners	Total Contributions	Major Contributors and percent of total contributions
2	Statutory: Appointed judges not labeled incumbents on ballot Bill Sizemore, Timothy R. Trickey	\$12,000	100% from Loren Parks
3*	Statutory: Unlimited deductibility of federal taxes Bill Sizemore, Timothy R. Trickey, Russell R. Walker	\$122,500	100% from Loren Parks
19*	Statutory: Restricts bilingual education to only two years Alan Grosso, Bill Sizemore, Russell R. Walker	\$123,000	100% from Loren Parks
20*	Statutory: Bar use of seniority in teacher pay and hiring Bill Sizemore, Russell R. Walker	\$121,000	100% from Loren Parks
21	Statutory: Building permits not needed for projects of less than \$35,000 Alan Grosso, Bill Sizemore	\$175,000	100% from Hire Calling Public Affairs (Richard Wendt)
25	Statutory: Penalizes for use of political funds collected with public resources Bill Sizemore	\$125,000	100% from Loren Parks
32	Statutory: Every initiative signature must be examined Bill Sizemore, Timothy R. Trickey	\$37,000	100% from Loren Parks
37	Statutory: Allows Portland area casino Matt Rossman, Bruce Studer	\$52,592	100% from Mariposa LLC
40*	Statutory: Mandatory sentences for identity theft, forgery, drug & burglary Duane Fletchall, Steve Beck, Kevin L. Mannix	\$128,000	96% from Loren Parks 4% from Kevin L. Mannix PC
41*	Amends Constitution: 15% of lottery profits for crime prevention, investigation & prosecution Duane Fletchall, Steve Beck, Kevin L. Mannix	\$178,500	97% from Loren Parks 3% from Kevin L. Mannix PC
51	Statutory: Limits fees paid to plaintiff attorneys Michael Reeder, Glenn Pelikan, Russell R. Walker	\$134,700	93% from Loren Parks, 3% from Kevin L. Mannix PC, 2% each from NW Physicians and Doctors Co. PAC
53	Statutory: Penalizes lawyers who file frivolous lawsuits Michael Reeder, Glenn Pelikan, Russell R. Walker	\$134,700	93% from Loren Parks, 3% from Kevin L. Mannix PC, 2% each from NW Physicians and Doctors Co. PAC
54	Amends Constitution : Allows regulation of strip clubs Kevin L. Mannix, Julia Allison, Margaret W. Houck	\$13,297	87% from Kevin L. Mannix PC, 11% from Salem Golf Club
61	Statutory: Property tax exemptions for seniors Bill Sizemore	\$10,994	100% from contributions of \$100 or less
78	Amends Constitution: Restricts legislative use of emergency clause Bill Sizemore, Lawrence George	\$100,000	100% from Hire Calling Public Affairs (Richard Wendt)
109	Statutory: Open primary Phil Keisling	\$18,991	48% from contributors giving \$100 or less, 26% from William Swindells, 26% from 13 other donors giving between \$200 and \$567

*Indicates initiatives for which signatures have already been submitted to the Secretary of State.

Loren Parks is the major donor for ten initiatives. (See chart 2.) He is footing the entire bill for six initiatives from Bill Sizemore. On three of these proposals, Russ Walker of the Oregon chapter of Freedomworks is also a chief petitioner. The three Sizemore-Walker initiatives bankrolled by Parks call for making federal income taxes fully deductible on state forms, restricting bilingual education to only two years, and not allowing use of seniority in teacher pay and hiring decisions.

The other Sizemore measures funded by Parks are not labeling appointed judges as incumbents on the ballot, penalizing for use of political funds collected with public resources, and requiring that every signature on initiatives be examined by the Secretary of State.

All of the money from Loren Parks is reported as in-kind contributions to Democracy Direct, a signature-gathering firm run by Tim Trickey. Trickey also joins Sizemore as a chief petitioner on three initiatives.

Hire Calling Public Affairs in Klamath Falls has made the second largest contribution to signature gathering efforts thus far in the 2008 initiative season. (See chart 2.) Their support is also reported as in-kind contributions to Democracy Direct and totals \$275,000. This money is going to two Sizemore measures, one that would no longer require building permits for projects under \$35,000 and another that restricts use of emergency clauses by the legislature.

According to state corporations records, the president of Hire Calling Public Affairs is John Courtney who is also president of the American Institute for Full Employment (AIFE) that has offices in Washington, D.C. and Klamath Falls. Richard Wendt is listed as president of AIFE in their corporation filings. Wendt is also the founder and chairman of Jeld-Wen, Inc., the Klamath Fall-based door and window manufacturing company that is now international in scope.

Out of the nine initiatives pushed by Sizemore, only one received no funding from either Parks or Hire Calling Public Affairs. This measure, which allows for property tax exemptions for seniors, raised \$11,000 in small contributions of \$100 or less.

Kevin Mannix is working on four initiatives that are getting almost all their financial support from Parks' checkbook. (See chart 2.) In-kind contributions from his law firm worth \$30,017 make Mannix the third highest signature-gathering contributor so far for 2008 initiatives. His support focuses on two crime-related measures on which he is chief petitioner, as well as two measures related to plaintiff attorney fees and frivolous lawsuits on which Russ Walker is a chief petitioner.

In all, Russ Walker of Freedomworks is a chief petitioner on five initiatives. Bill Sizemore is a fellow petitioner on three initiatives and Kevin Mannix has made in-kind contributions to the other two. Walker's involvement in 2008 initiatives, however, looks different from the role he played in qualifying petitions to the 2006 ballot. Walker's Oregon Citizens for a Sound Economy committee spent \$165,000 on signature gathering to qualify two petitions for the last general election. Thus far in the 2008 initiative season Walker is relying on financial support from Loren Parks.

"There is still a long way to go until July 2008 when all petition signatures must be turned in," said Thompson, "so other players may join Parks and the Wendts in our direct democracy process that is, unfortunately, looking more like checkbook democracy."

Democracy Reform Oregon (DRO) is a non-partisan, not-for-profit group working to increase accountability and opportunities for participation in politics and governmental decision-making. DRO has been working on democracy reform issues since 1999 and was formerly the Money in Politics Research Action Project.

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