



For Immediate Release
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Denver City Council Member Proposes Gutting Fair Elections

Council, Mayor Consider Nixing New Campaign Finance Law That Won 71% of the Vote

Denver - Earlier this year, Denver enacted **The Fair Elections Act**, a new campaign finance ordinance that passed with an overwhelming **71% of the vote** in the November, 2018 election. In an election featuring record-breaking turnout, Denver voters delivered a resounding victory for reforms aimed at **getting the corrupting influence of big money out of local politics** and **empowering working class Denver residents and underrepresented communities** - including young people, women, and people of color - to run for and win elected office.

At a Wednesday morning budget hearing, Denver City Councilman Kevin Flynn, a longstanding critic of the popular reforms, proposed **cutting the funding for The Fair Elections Act**, citing his discomfort with "**the optics**" involved in **honoring the will of the voters** to use less than 2/10 of 1 percent (.002) of the annual budget to **ensure clean and fair elections**.

Flynn claimed that the ordinance only benefits politicians, but **over 200,000 Denver voters - including a majority of voters in every precinct in the city** - went to the polls and emphatically voiced their belief that **fair elections are an essential benefit to all Denver residents**. Voters set a priority of allocating public funds to implement anti-corruption reforms, including the new law's centerpiece, a charge to use a small portion of public funds to **match contributions of up to \$50** for qualified candidates who opt-in to the program and turn down all Political Action Committee (PAC) and special interest contributions. Additionally, the ordinance **bans corporate contributions**, sharply **reduces the high contribution limits** for Denver campaigns, and, through an accompanying reform, **requires the disclosure of dark money**.

At a time when eight-of-ten Americans are concerned about the health of our democracy, The Fair Elections Act emerged as the gold standard in countering the outsized influence of big money in our elections. **Flynn's proposal would usurp the will of the voters**, taking funds the people of Denver unequivocally authorized and reallocating the money to proposed budget amendments that better align with Flynn's sense of "optics."

"The sanctity of the vote is one of the most cherished values we have in the United States, and Councilman Flynn's proposal **not only nullifies the election reforms Denver voters put in place** to combat corruption and strengthen our democracy, it would go even further and **invalidate the very votes cast by hundreds of thousands of Denverites**," said Owen Perkins, the 2018 Campaign Manager for the **Democracy For The People Initiative** that introduced the reforms. "This dangerous affront to the integrity of our elections brings to life **the worst fears of Denver voters** - the fear that our votes don't really matter when we're faced with a City Council willing to **disenfranchise voters, reject election results, and reverse the outcome of a monumental mandate at the polls**."

A diverse collection of strong community organizations united in support of the 2018 ballot measure, including CleanSlateNow Action, Our Revolution, The Democratic Party of Denver, Colorado Working Families Party, The Denver Green Party, Colorado Progressive Democrats of America, Represent Us, Every Voice, Move to Amend, Denver Democratic Socialists of America, CoPIRG, and The League of Women Voters, among others.

The 2018 measure was also publicly endorsed by elected officials and candidates for office, including current Council members **Robin Kniech** (At-Large), **Debbie Ortega** (At-Large), **Paul Kashmann** (District 6), **Candi CdeBaca** (District 9), **Chris Hinds** (District 10), and County Clerk and Recorder **Paul Lopez** (a former Council member representing District 3 in 2018).

For more information about The Fair Elections Act, [please click here](#).

Media Contact: Owen Perkins, Campaign Manager (2018)
The Democracy For The People Campaign
(303) 881-8881 (cell); DFPpress@gmail.com

Susan Gilbert, Steering Committee (2018)
The Democracy For The People Campaign
(303) 704-5580; sgilbertpda@gmail.com

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