



For Immediate Release
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Denver City Council Votes 8-5 to Protect Fair Elections

Majority of City Council Members Vote to Block a Proposal to Cut Fair Elections Funding

Denver - The People of Denver were the winners at the Denver City Council Meeting Monday night, when **a majority of Council Members voted to block Councilman Kevin Flynn's bill to cut funding for Fair Elections with an 8-5 vote.** Council needed at least five votes to defeat the bill, which required a 2/3 majority to cut or suspend funding for Fair Elections. ***The eight votes to defeat the bill signaled a decisive victory to protect Fair Elections.***

Denver enacted The Fair Elections Act effective January 1, 2020, starting the first day of the 2023 election cycle with the implementation of a new campaign finance ordinance that **passed with an overwhelming 71% of the vote** in the November, 2018 election, **winning in every precinct in the city.** In an election featuring record-breaking turnout, over 200,000 Denver voters delivered a resounding victory for reforms aimed at getting the corrupting influence of big money out of local politics and **empowering Denver residents from marginalized communities - including young people, women, people of color, and people from working families - to run for and win elected office.**

Flynn's suggestion to cut funding came up quietly three weeks ago and seemed likely to slip through without much fanfare in the effort to secure funds for City Council's proposed budget amendments. **Mayor Michael Hancock** seized on the idea, offering to use Fair Elections funds for even more than Council asked for if they would free up Fair Elections funds through a clause enabling Council to declare a fiscal emergency and cut or suspend funding of the voter-mandated Fair Elections Act. **The public outcry that ensued ensured the bill got the serious attention and public scrutiny it deserved,** and the vast majority of City Council members ultimately sided with their constituents.

"Denver's Fair Elections Act started as a grassroots effort, **The Democracy For The People Initiative**, to get the corrupting influence of big money out of elections and to bring the essential benefit of clean and fair elections to all Denver residents," said Owen Perkins, President of CleanSlateNow Action and the campaign manager for the 2018 effort. "It was supported by 71% of Denver voters, so **it is fitting that the people of Denver came to its defense** and put the brakes on an effort to cut or suspend funds for Fair Elections."

Thousands of supporters took immediate action when Flynn's effort came to light, signing a petition to "Defend Fair Elections," spreading the word, calling and writing their Council Members, and giving compelling testimony at the past two City Council Meetings.

"There's no way Fair Elections could have been properly defended without the activism of Denver residents," Perkins added. "At a time when our democratic institutions are already under unprecedented threat, we need to do everything we can to defend democracy. **The People of Denver led when they placed these anti-corruption reforms into law, and they are leading again with the eternal vigilance necessary to ensure democracy survives and thrives at every level.**"

In a letter sent to supporters on Tuesday, **CleanSlateNow offered special thanks to the Council Members** who carefully considered the bill, listened to their constituents, and were moved to defend Fair Elections with a NO vote on Flynn's proposed cuts. The eight Council Members voting NO included **Candi CdeBaca, Chris Hinds, Paul Kashmann, Amanda Sawyer, Amanda Sandoval, Jamie Torres, Stacie Gilmore, and Robin Kniech.**

The unexpected threat to The Fair Elections Act prompted a number of community organizations to answer the call to action, to speak out to defend Fair Elections, and to mobilize their respective supporters to make their voices heard. Those organizations included **CleanSlateNow Action, Colorado PDA, Our Revolution Metro Denver, Move To Amend, The Campaign Legal Center, Colorado DSA, CoPIRG, Colorado Working Families Party, Colorado Latino Forum, and Colorado Common Cause.**

The massive mandate voters delivered in 2018 spoke to the people's 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.**

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

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