

Prop. 306: Clean Elections; Unlawful Contributions; Rulemaking

Arguments Submitted “Against” Prop. 306

This ballot measure is an attempt to horribly weaken Arizona's Clean Elections Commission. Many years ago Arizona citizens wisely voted to create a public financed alternative for candidates that chose not to be funded by special interests or their lobbyists. This proposition removes rulemaking and enforcement authority from the commission and gives it to a politically appointed, special interest body that can and will weaken the Clean Elections Commission.

Don't let this happen. Protect our existing Clean Elections Commission. Don't let corporate special interests destroy its enforcement authority.

I urge you to vote NO.

Chris Herstam, Proud Arizona resident for 60 years, Phoenix

The non-partisan League of Women Voters of Arizona urges a NO vote on Proposition _____, the Arizona Legislature’s attempt to weaken the AZ Clean Election Law by limiting the independence of the AZ Citizens Clean Elections Commission and making it subject to partisan control.

The League of Women Voters helped draft the original initiative that created the AZ Clean Elections Law and worked for its passage in 1998. The AZ Clean Elections Law is a model nationwide for public financing of elections. It is the Voters’ Voice in the enforcement of our campaign finance laws and it provides objective and timely voter information to all Arizona voters.

The statewide Commission that oversees the AZ Clean Elections Law was intentionally created to be a nonpartisan and independent entity. The commission’s rule making authority granted to it by the initiative has maintained its independence while providing adequate opportunities for public comment on such rules.

The Arizona Legislature’s proposed revision to the AZ Clean Elections Commission’s rule making process will allow a totally partisan entity, appointed only by the Governor, to oversee the Commission’s rule making, thus removing its independence. Passage of Proposition _____ will likely weaken the commission’s ability to oversee the enforcement of campaign finance laws, to maintain adequate oversight of the funding it provides to Clean Election Candidates and could even curtail its valuable voter education program.

We need to Strengthen NOT weaken the AZ Clean Elections Law and keep partisan politics out of campaign financing. Vote NO on Proposition _____.

Robyn Prud'homme-Bauer, Co-President, League of Women Voters of Arizona, Clarkdale

Arizona voters created the Clean Elections system in 1998 because they were fed up with corruption in our politics. Clean Elections is non-partisan. It educates voters about candidates

and the electoral process, and it funds candidates who run without the corrupting influence of outside donors and corporate cash. The Clean Elections Commission also oversees campaign contributions to make sure they follow the law and creates new rules when needed. Our Clean Elections system has become a national model for fighting corruption in politics and encouraging candidates to focus on voters, not big donors.

People with big money to spend on elections and the politicians who depend on their cash don't like Clean Elections or controls on corporate campaign contributions. Prop. ___ is designed to cripple the clean-elections system in two ways. It would hamstring clean-elections candidates by eliminating their access to party-maintained voter databases, an essential tool for anyone running for office. And Prop. ___ would eliminate the authority of the Clean Elections Commission to oversee campaign contributions. In its place would be a highly partisan board of corporate elites and partisan politicians hand-picked by the governor, a veritable black hole for dark-money politics.

Dr. Doris Marie Provine, individual, Tempe

Clean Elections – a real Arizona success story – makes politicians focus on voters, not dollars, to get elected. That's why the political establishment hates it so much. Prop ___ is their latest ploy to take the teeth out of Clean Elections and get back to corrupt politics-as-usual.

The non-partisan Citizens' Clean Elections Commission does a lot for Arizona voters. It gives Arizonans of all walks of life the chance to run for office. It educates voters about how to get registered, when and where to vote, and who and what is on the ballot. But what really bothers the elite big-money crowd is the Commission's duty to track campaign spending, and to expose and punish illegal contributions.

Clean Elections is our watchdog, and Prop ___ is the establishment's attempt to defang it. How? By giving an obscure board of political insiders hand-picked by the Governor the power to overrule the watchdog. That's right – they want to trick voters into weakening our own independent Clean Elections Commission.

If the political establishment gets their way, greedy corporations and billionaires will be free to mess with our elections, leaving our voices unheard.

Clean Elections is one of the best ideas to come from Arizona's voters. We cannot let the political establishment tear it down.

Say NO to more secret money in our elections.

Say NO to a political and corporate takeover of our Clean Elections Commission.

Say NO to Prop ___.

Joel Edman, Arizona Advocacy Network, Phoenix and Morgan Dick, Arizona Advocacy Network, Phoenix

Sponsored by Arizona Advocacy Network

Twenty years ago, Arizona voters approved formation of the Arizona Citizens Clean Election Commission, to “improve the integrity of Arizona state government and promote public confidence in the Arizona political process.”

Now the Arizona Legislature wants to trick you into doing away with the nonpartisan Clean Elections Commission's core mission– and turn the process over to a shadow group of political appointees, representing only the governor.

Legislators opposed to the public knowing who gave them campaign money have long hated Clean Elections. To them, sunshine is not a disinfectant but an irritation.

But those legislators have been stymied in doing away with Clean Elections because you – the voters of Arizona – established it.

Enter Prop. 306. It was placed on the ballot by legislators to essentially neuter Clean Elections. But unless you are a legal scholar, it would be difficult to figure that out, with the odious intent cloaked with a bland title: “Clean Elections; Unlawful Contributions; Rulemaking.”

The Clean Elections Commission is made up of five people. The state’s top elected Republican and Democrat alternate making appointments. There can be no more than two members of any party. The current commission has two Republicans, two Democrats and an Independent.

That kind of bipartisanship – imposed by you, the voter – is bothersome to strongly partisan legislators. But knowing they cannot do away with Clean Elections, they came up with a sneaky alternative: Make them subservient to a group of partisans.

Prop. 306 would allow the little-known Governor’s Regulatory Review Council to have the final word on Clean Election rules. That council is made up of people appointed only by the governor and his political insiders.

Don’t be fooled by this legislative flim-flam. Don’t let politicians appoint their friends to write campaign rules. Vote no on Prop. 306 and

Mark Kimble, Tucson

Vote NO on Proposition _____

This referendum from the Legislature is a power grab by the Governor and legislators who resent the good work that the Clean Election Commission (CCEC) does to (1) require disclosure of corrupting dark money in elections, (2) educate voters about elections, (3) and create more opportunities for people to run for office.

The legislative analysis, above, omits two important facts:

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1) If voters accept this referendum, the Governor, through his Governor's Regulatory Review Council, will force the CCEC to over-turn its own rules, which require disclosure of dark money and its corrupting influence.

Please bear in mind that the CCEC's rule-making authority is something that the public passed in the original proposition that created the Commission. That rule-making authority was put in place in order prevent political power grabs from the Governor and the Legislature.

There is a long history of the Legislature and Governor attempting to neuter the work of the CCEC. This proposition is nothing but a clever way to try to get you to allow the Governor and Legislature to clip the CCEC's wings.

2) The proponents imply that this amendment is designed to prohibit Clean Elections candidates from "giving" money to political parties. What they don't tell you is the CCEC already prohibits candidates from giving money to political parties. Through existing rules adopted by the CCEC, candidates cannot give money to a political party or "pool" money with other candidates.

These two elements are designed to undermine the CCEC, a voter-approved body that has been the only entity in government that actually works for true campaign finance disclosure, while educating the public and creating opportunities for more people to run for office.

Say no to this power grab.

Ken Clark, State Representative, Legislative District 24, Phoenix

Prop XXX Will Harm Clean Elections!

Proposition XXX is just one more bad idea from an Arizona Legislature that is out of touch with the people. Sierra Club's Grand Canyon Chapter supported Clean Elections in 1998, when it was placed on the ballot via a citizen initiative, and has consistently supported it as the Legislature has sought to neuter its enforcement in order to discourage candidates who would rely on the people rather than big money interests to fund their campaigns.

The Citizens Clean Elections Commission is an important part of the Clean Elections program as it serves as a key watchdog, helping to safeguard our elections. It is a nonpartisan entity and doesn't do the bidding of one party or another. It has enforced against Democratic and Republican candidates alike.

This proposal from the Arizona Legislature would weaken the Citizens Clean Elections Commission and subject it to more control by whoever is governor, via a governor-appointed board. This could make it difficult for the Clean Elections Commission to fulfill its responsibilities to voters, including providing accurate and nonpartisan information on the candidates and enforcing key elections rules.

Make no mistake, Prop XXX is a direct attack on Clean Elections and will serve the interests of a few deep pockets at the expense of voters and our democracy. Tell the Arizona Legislature you

don't support its proposal to undermine Clean Elections and the Citizens Clean Elections Commission by voting NO on Proposition XXX.

Clean Elections are important to our democracy and our democracy is essential to helping us work more effectively for clean air, clean water, clean energy, and a healthy environment for all. The Grand Canyon Chapter of the Sierra Club opposes Prop XXX for these reasons.

Keith Bagwell, Chapter Chairperson, Sierra Club - Grand Canyon (Arizona) Chapter, Tucson and Don Steuter, Conservation Chairperson, Sierra Club - Grand Canyon (Arizona) Chapter, Phoenix
Sponsored by Sierra Club - Grand Canyon (Arizona) Chapter

For the last 20 years, Arizona's nonpartisan and voter-approved Citizen's Clean Elections Commission (CCEC) has shined a constant light on the unaccountable and untraceable campaign money flowing into Arizona. CCEC performs a unique and important duty to enforce campaign finance laws, independent of whatever political party is in power.

Unfortunately the passage of Prop XXX threatens that independence. Prop XXX will empower political insiders, appointed by the Governor, to suppress CCEC's regulatory and enforcement powers in state elections. It will stop Clean Elections from bringing more transparency to our elections. Make no mistake, Prop XXX is a power grab by special interest groups that want to further flood our elections with more unaccountable dark money (aka – dirty money).

As city leaders, we value the role Clean Elections performs in state elections, and we champion campaign finance reform in our respective cities to give voters the right to know who is trying to influence our local elections.

Despite overwhelming popular support, efforts for disclosure are being challenged at every level of government. Although 91% of Tempe's voters said "NO" to secret spending and "YES" to disclosure, and before Phoenix voters even have had a chance to vote on the issue, politicians at the Arizona Capitol who benefit from dark-money contributions are trying to stop reform. Prop XXX is a further assault on campaign finance disclosure laws that the public overwhelmingly demands.

We cannot let Clean Elections become a tool for the special interests to further hide dark money from Arizona voters. The public has a right to know who is paying for political speech in our elections.

Arizona, this vote is your opportunity to say enough is enough.

Vote NO on Prop XXX.

Phoenix Councilwoman Kate Gallego and Tempe Councilmember Lauren Kuby.

Kate Gallego, Phoenix Councilwoman, Phoenix and Lauren Kuby, Tempe Councilmember, Tempe

As a member-led organization advocating on the issues impacting our most vulnerable communities, Our Voice Our Vote Arizona stands in strong opposition of Prop XXX. Prop XXX would let the Governor reject Clean Elections rules he/she doesn't like through an appointed board of powerful corporate elites and partisan politicians. If we truly want to transform our political system we cannot continue to allow the same political operatives to dismantle the systems put in place to protect the best interest of our communities.

The Clean Elections Commission has played a vital role in advocating for Arizona Voters by helping voters to get registered, providing information on elections and informing citizens of the issues at stake. If Prop XXX passes, it will give a green light to outside groups to take more control over our elections. It's been proven time and time again- when corporate elites and partisan politicians wield too much influence in our political system, the results are typically at the expense of average Americans.

The Clean Elections Act was meant to restore citizen participation and confidence in our political system. As an Organization we have daily conversations with voters and we can tell you- this is still what Arizonans want and deserve. Approving this initiative would lead us in the exact opposite and wrong direction. In order to protect the balance of power in favor of the people, we implore you to vote no on Prop XXX.

Cymone Bolding, Co-Executive Director, Our Voice Our Vote Arizona, Laveen

HCR2007, the so-called "Clean Elections, Unlawful Contributions Rulemaking" is an attempt to fool voters into approving an attempt to gut the Citizens Clean Election Commission and undermine Arizona's popular anti-corruption law to the benefit of wealthy special interests. HCR2007 eliminates the Commission's independent, nonpartisan authority to enforce the law, and instead gives the final say to the Governor's Regulatory Review Council, a hyper-partisan group stacked with corporate elites and professional political operatives. The Governor appoints six of the Review Council's members. It's not an independent review council at all. Quite the opposite.

Supporters of HCR 2007 love their dark money donors and want to operate without independent oversight, just like they did in the bad old days before the Clean Elections Commission was established in 1998. They hate the fact that the Clean Elections Commission operates independently and want to destroy its ability to shine a little light on an often-corrupt political process. Why else would HCR 2007 supporters sneak this misleading piece of corrupt legislation on to the ballot in the middle of the night, three minutes before the legislature adjourned on May 4th?

HCR 2007 proponents hope to sucker you, claiming it keeps Clean Elections money from flowing to political parties. That's sleight of hand designed to keep your eye off its real purpose: to destroy the Clean Elections Commission's independence. Don't be fooled by this corrupt and misleading initiative. Vote "NO" against HCR2007. When you vote "No" you support clean elections in Arizona, and say "no" to the corrupt, dark money interests who want to see it passed.

P.S. The Clean Elections Commission is suing the legislature, claiming it's trying to mislead Arizona voters.

Robert Allen, Arizona Voter, Marana

Chispa Arizona: No on Prop XXXX

Arizona voters approved the establishment of the Citizens' Clean Elections Commission to protect our democracy and fight the corrupting influence of money in politics. The electorate chose to create an independent agency twenty years ago to operate above the political fray and oversee our campaign finance laws. Since then the amount of money in politics has exploded, creating an environment where campaigns are more expensive than ever, and candidates are more responsive to special interest dollars than the average voter. In times like these we need transparent and impartial oversight to preserve our faith in the political process.

This proposal would rob the Commission of its independent, voter-approved ability to oversee campaign finance laws, instead handing it to a board appointed by a partisan elected official - the sitting Governor.

Chispa Arizona, a program of the League of Conservation Voters, believes that democracy should be about putting people first. We oppose any proposition that dilutes the voices of our community in the democratic process. This plan is a gift to corporations, inviting them to exert even greater sway over our elections and undermine our rights as Arizonans. This does not create a solution to improve democracy -- it undermines it altogether. We need a Commission that is fair, impartial, and defends the interests of everyday Arizonans, not an appointed body of friendly regulators. Our elections cannot and should not be sold to the highest corporate bidder. Join us in rejecting this proposal and defending our right to a free and fair democracy. We oppose this proposition.

Laura Dent, Executive Director, Chispa AZ, Tucson

Incumbent politicians support Prop. xxx, but ordinary citizens should vote NO!

Voters passed the popular Clean Elections Act 20 years ago to reduce the corrupt practice of "buying politicians" with campaign "donations."

Incumbent politicians don't like that the Citizens Clean Election Commission is independent and represents people, not politicians. This proposition is the latest attack, proposed without asking Arizonans to sign petitions.

The proposition deletes just a few words, but ones with big impact! This would damage the Commission's independence by allowing political appointees to veto Commission rules against campaign-funding tricks. The Commission must remain independent, unlike other agencies, which should be subordinate to the elected governor.

The powers behind this proposal are trying to hide the significance of this change with an uninformative description and a deletion buried in a measure adding words about another subject.

Some are trying to fool you by pretending that approval is needed to block funneling money to political parties, but the Commission already has rules against that. Worse, this proposal bars all

purchases, even fair ones, and applies only to challengers who use the “clean” system. Politicians who get money from those who seek influence can still “funnel” with political parties.

We are ordinary citizens, of both major political parties, who served on the Commission. One of us served as State Elections Director. Another wrote the Clean Elections Act. None of us has run for office. We have worked hard for an even-handed Commission serving the people’s interests. We urge everyone – no matter what party you support or if you are independent – to keep Clean Elections the way it is – don’t be tricked into giving away your right to an independent Commission!

Amy B. Chan – Republican, Phoenix

Louis J. Hoffman – Democrat, Scottsdale

Timothy J. Reckart – Republican, Tucson

Amy Chan, Phoenix, Louis Hoffman, Scottsdale, and Timothy Reckart, Sr., Tucson
Sponsored by Louis Hoffman

Arizona’s democracy is in trouble. We see it every day at the state capitol. Lobbyists for greedy corporations get the special favors they want from a political establishment that benefits from maintaining this unequal status quo. Meanwhile pleas from students, teachers and parents for well-funded schools go unheard, and working class families struggle to find good-paying jobs in an economy whose rules are rigged in favor of the elite.

Clean Elections is the one public body shining a light in all this darkness. That’s why we ask you to vote NO on Prop ____.

We ran for office to put people before profits. We knew that wouldn’t be popular with the political establishment, but thanks to the voter-created Clean Elections program, we could run without being independently wealthy or having the “right” connections.

Clean Elections means that leaders are accountable to their voters, NOT to greedy corporations and lobbyists. Clean Elections is the only agency that consistently holds politicians and greedy interest groups accountable, and exposes illegal campaign contributions. That’s exactly why the political establishment has been trying to get rid of Clean Elections ever since you, the voters, created it.

Prop __ is their latest trick to undermine Clean Elections. Don’t fall for it. We fought against Prop __ as the politicians at the state capitol passed it (literally) in the middle of the night, because you deserve better.

Keep the light shining on Arizona’s democracy. Vote NO on Prop ____.

Juan Mendez, Senator, Legislative District 26, Tempe, Athena Salman, Representative, Legislative District 26, Tempe, and Isela Blanc, Representative, Legislative District 26, Tempe

If you're like me, you're sick of how corrupt and divisive our state and national politics have become. Our elections are awash in so much money these days, and every year it gets harder to know who's trying to influence us - and our elected leaders.

Our current Secretary of State and the entrenched political establishment are complicit, doing everything they can to let even more unaccountable "dark" money into our elections. These politicians see partisan advantage to be gained from flooding our state with money from out-of-state billionaires and secretive interest groups. That's plain wrong.

We can't hand our democracy over to a handful of billionaires, no matter which party benefits. Democracy is too important. That's why I fought against big money as a state lawmaker, and why I'm running to be the next Secretary of State.

Clean Elections is an independent, bipartisan guardian for our elections. Its job is to protect democracy for ALL of us, not just billionaires and greedy corporations. It's part of what makes Arizona great - most states don't have anything like Clean Elections to hold their politicians accountable.

It's no surprise politicians like our current Secretary of State want to undercut Clean Elections. That's exactly what Prop ___ is designed to do. Prop ___ would put Clean Elections under the control of a group of political insiders chosen by the Governor. That's a recipe for less transparency in our state government, and more corruption.

Join me in standing up to big money. Vote NO on Prop ___.

Katie Hobbs, Senate Minority Leader, Phoenix

Since 2013, Tom Collins has been the executive director of the Arizona Citizens Clean Elections Commission. This statement is by Mr. Collins personally, not an official act of the Commission.

Voters approved the Arizona Citizens Clean Elections Act 20 years ago. The Act created the Citizens Clean Elections Commission, a bipartisan, independent board serving Arizona voters by fighting corruption and increasing informed participation in elections.

The Commissioners take their role seriously. They do not make the law—the voters did that in 1998 – rather, they apply and interpret the Clean Elections Act faithfully and fairly. The Commission has enforced the law without regard to party or politics, but according to its text. The Commission has fought to ensure politicians and independents spenders are accountable to the law and to voters.

Proposition XXX betrays these values. First, it bars candidates who run in the voter-created Clean Funding program from making the same purchases ordinary candidates can make—even with their own money. Clean Candidates refuse to take large special interest donations that ordinary candidates regularly accept and collect most of their contributions from voters in their districts. Prop. XXX punishes Clean Candidates for holding themselves to a higher standard. It gets worse. A small group of special interests lobbyists and lawmakers want to undermine the Commission's independence. They want to pile on new, confusing rulemaking requirements. Worse, according to this small group, Prop. XXX would subject the Commission's decisions to

the Governor's Regulatory Review Commission (GRRC), a partisan body appointed exclusively by the Governor. GRRC is made up former politicians, special interest groups, and dark money players. These are the insiders voters wanted Clean Elections insulated from. Voters set up Clean Elections to be independent and to apply the law fairly, as written by the voters. Vote no on Proposition XXX.

Tom Collins, Tempe