

Chair Nelson, members, my name is George Beck. I am on the Board of Clean elections Minnesota, a non-partisan nonprofit that works for fair elections in our state. We strongly support H.F. 3190.

This bill takes steps to lessen dark money in elections in our state by expanding the definition of “expressly advocating” so that contributors cannot hide their identity when supporting independent expenditures for electioneering communications such as mailings, billboards, and TV and radio ads.

This change has been supported by the Minnesota Campaign Finance Board and has been adopted in 19 other states. This reform does not deny free speech, but merely asks, “Who is speaking?” Who supports a candidate financially is important information for a voter to know since it could influence an officeholder’s vote.

HF 3190 also provides that independent expenditures must disclose its top three contributors. This transparency in contributions permits a voter to understand who is supplying the biggest contributions. These changes will bring Minnesota in line with transparency in other states. They are outstanding examples of needed democracy reform.

Thank you.