



April 10, 2024

Chair Aisha Gomez  
House Taxes Committee  
453 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Gomez and Members:

I am writing in support of SF4728, the Political Contribution Refund (PCR) Modernization Act. The extensive amount of big and dark money flowing into elections is staggering and threatens our democracy. A Pew Research study from the fall of 2023 said that Americans feel major donors have too much influence. Large majorities across party lines say that big campaign donors and special interests have too much influence on decisions. People in members' own districts, by contrast, are widely viewed as having *too little* influence.

Public financing programs put more power into the hands of everyday voters. This bill will help in a small but important way to offset the imbalance by making the public financing program we have in Minnesota, the PCR, easier to use. Increased participation and revenue from the PCR program will make candidates less dependent on big donors and more accountable to voters. Increased revenue for campaigns will increase the number of candidates who participate in the program and who agree to campaign spending limits.

The Department of Revenue received about 45,000 PCR claims in 2022. The time that individual voters need to take to manually fill out the paperwork, the time the Campaign Finance Board needs to record the information and the time the Department of Revenue needs to manually process the forms is a burden for everyone involved and a barrier to participation.

We believe we need to provide more options for public financing programs. But modernizing the process is a great first step in encouraging participation in the program and empowering voters and strengthening our democracy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Hartnett". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized script.

Mary Hartnett  
Executive Director