



September 20, 2018

Council President Herb Wesson  
Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee  
200 N. Spring Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE: Matching Funds Campaign Finance Reforms**

Dear Council President Wesson,

Thank you for scheduling Council Files 15-1088-S1 and 12-1269-S5 regarding campaign finance reform and matching funds. We introduced Council File 15-1088-S1 "Matching Funds Rate Increase" in January, 2017 to improve the City's matching funds program by empowering small dollar donors.

Our offices have worked with the Ethics Commission over the past year on campaign finance reforms and are generally supportive of the recommendations contained in Council File 12-1269-S5. That report includes an increase in the matching funds rate to 6:1 in both primary and general elections, as requested in our motion.

One crucial element from our proposal, strongly supported by campaign finance advocates, was overlooked in the Commission's recommendations. For the matching funds rate increase to 6:1 to empower small dollar donors effectively, the qualified contribution to be matched must be correspondingly reduced. Currently those levels stand at \$250 per qualified contribution for City Council candidates and \$500 for Citywide candidates (§ 49.7.27 Matching Funds Formula).

As stated in our motion, those rates should be set closer to \$100 for City Council races. For simplicity, since the Ethics Commission recommendations now automatically index more dollar amounts to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the committee could consider setting the qualified contribution level at 1/7<sup>th</sup> of the maximum contribution allowed. This change would allow the level to adjust automatically each election cycle and enable a fully matched contribution to equal a maximum contribution.

Thank you for hearing this matter and we request that this recommendation be included in the final committee report.

Sincerely,

DAVID E. RYU  
Councilmember, 4th District

JOE BUSCAINO  
Councilmember, 15th District