

**From:** [Moua, Louansee](#)  
**To:** [DowntownWestD6](#)  
**Subject:** Fw: Support for Jimenez Supplemental Memo Item 3.6 Discussion and Possible Actions Regarding Campaign Finance Regulations  
**Date:** Monday, May 24, 2021 11:52:12 AM

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**From:** Jake Tonkel [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 20, 2021 9:56 AM  
**To:** District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>; The Office of Mayor Sam Liccardo <TheOfficeofMayorSamLiccardo@sanjoseca.gov>; City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>  
**Subject:** Support for Jimenez Supplemental Memo Item 3.6 Discussion and Possible Actions Regarding Campaign Finance Regulations

[External Email]

Hello honorable Councilmembers & Mayor,

I am positive I don't need to explain how influential money was in the 2020 elections. With roughly \$2 million spent on 2 city council seats, we are reaching a point of no return in our election process and quickly losing trust from the community. I want to urge you to support Councilmember Jimenez's Supplemental Memo to 3.6 Discussion and Possible Actions Regarding Campaign Finance Regulations.

I want to speak from personal experience as to how detrimental weak campaign finance, disclosure and reporting regulations were not just to my campaign but to council member Davis' as well and the brutal impact to our residents. Many of the solutions are clearly laid out in the Jimenez memo so I will simply speak to the current issues we need to address.

The fact that only a small group of voters understand the difference between a candidate controlled committee and a PAC is our responsibility. On too many occasions, residents would tell me how terrible Councilmember Davis was for her attacks on me. I say this in that way because I had to correct people time and time again. Councilmember Davis did not send, approve or assist in that ugly

messaging. While I did not win, I do not wish destruction of our local trust in the ability of elected officials and these negative perceptions of my opponent are unfair and only hurt our community as a whole. Even more politically engaged residents did not understand how to navigate the fine print of PAC ads, we need mechanisms that make it very clear if we want to build trust in local government.

Secondly, as we all were once candidates, we understand the nature of fundraising. It is not secret to you that in each race, there are roughly the same donors to every campaign. This small group of political players needs to be expanded if residents are to feel empowered to get involved in local elections. A donation limit was a good first step at limiting the outsized influence of the wealthy but it does not empower all residents equally. Candidates with less wealthy networks are considered less viable, regardless of their qualifications and this often discourages people from running in the first place. I feel extremely privileged to have had the support I did in my race but even with the focus on small dollar donations that my campaign had, there is no question that larger donations still played a significant role in reaching the level of success we did have.

Thirdly, regardless of what is true about the influence of donations on the actual votes of elected officials, the perception of residents of local corruption is extremely widespread and on all sides of the political spectrum. Again, I stress the importance of building trust in our election process. Residents are not blind to the influence of developers, real estate, google, and yes even unions in city council elections and the subsequent decisions made. While we should be very clear that the influence of these entities are not equal with pro business outspending unions 3 to 1, the fact is residents are distrusting of the entire process and we need solutions that reward community engagement, resident communication, education and transparency over monied interests. On many occasions voters were more concerned about trust in their elected official than with which political leaning the elected official had. That is the canary in the coal mine for a deteriorating democracy.

Lastly, the Board of Fair Political Practices needs to be a strong entity within San Jose. A commission with all volunteer resources that should be the driving force behind election integrity has been mostly ignored over the years. Providing the commission with more authority and resources is a great first step in putting a fair election process before political ties.

If you have any questions or concerns please reach out to me for a conversation.

Best,

Jake Tonkel

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