

CITY OF OAKLAND



CITY HALL • 1 FRANK H. OGAWA PLAZA • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612
#LoveLife
REBECCA KAPLAN (510) 238-7008
Vice Mayor Fax: (510)238-6910
atlarge@oaklandnet.com TDD: (510) 839-6451

* Emailed

April 13, 2022

Re: Item 6a - Letter of Support for the Democracy Dollars Proposal

Dear Public Ethics Commissioners:

I want to express my support of the Democracy Dollars Proposal from the Bay Area Political Equality Collaborative (BayPEC). The Democracy Dollars proposal would encourage voter turnout and help diversify the Oakland community's participation in our election process. Currently and unfortunately, those who are financially well off are more likely to contribute to campaigns. This should not be the case, all of Oakland should have the resources to support the candidate(s) they believe will best represent them.

The Democracy Dollars Proposal seeks to redesign Oakland's public financing system to facilitate meaningful participation by the Oakland Community and Candidates in the campaign process through a Democracy Dollars program that provides four \$25 fund vouchers, a total of \$100, to every Oakland voter to give to the candidate(s) of their choice. This would significantly address the alarming data found in the [September 2020, Public Ethics Commission's report](#) on Oakland's existing public financing program and overall campaign finance system. The report found that the existing system leaves out our low income and communities of color. In the Election Cycles of 2014, 2016, and 2018 over half of Oakland Campaign donors were clustered in four zip codes: 94612, 94610, 94618, and the largest 94611 – which are Oakland's wealthiest and majority white neighborhoods.

Although campaign funds do not guarantee that a candidate will win, they provide a significant advantage. Therefore, I ask that you approve the Democracy Dollars proposal to make the necessary and equitable improvements to our city's campaign finance system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Rebecca Kaplan".

Rebecca Kaplan
Oakland Vice Mayor, Councilmember At-Large