

COMMON CAUSE/OHIO

For Immediate Release

Contact – William Woods, Chair, Common Cause/Ohio
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Common Cause/Ohio joins the League of Women Voters and the Woman’s City Club in opposing Issue 46. “This proposed Amendment to the Cincinnati City Charter,” noted William Woods, Chair of Common Cause/Ohio, “would eliminate a valuable reform that is part of the Campaign Finance Reform Charter Amendment that was passed by the voters in 2001.”

The ballot language that voters will read, argues Woods, makes Issue 46 appear to call for a few technical changes that will improve public record keeping. “Shall the Charter of the City of Cincinnati be amended to align the dates of the campaign finance report filings for City Council and mayoral candidates with the dates City Council and mayoral candidates must file campaign finance reports with the Hamilton County Board of Elections by amending Section 2 of Article XIII?”

“What this bland statement will do if approved by the voters,” exclaimed Woods, “is eliminate the extra campaign donation filing report (60 days before the election) that was included in the 2001 Campaign Finance Reform Charter Amendment.” It would also eliminate the reporting requirement in the same Charter Amendment that says that candidates for Council or mayor must file a special report of large contributions (over \$500) in the 20-day period before a municipal election.

“Candidates for Council and for mayor in 2001,” continued Woods, “were already mandated to follow the state requirements for filing campaign donation reports (as they are today). However, the Fair Elections Coalition that sponsored the Campaign Finance Reform Amendment reasoned that an extra filing date closer to the election plus the 20-day large contributions filing would provide the public with greater knowledge about who was funding the campaigns of candidates for Council and for mayor. If anything, the growing public concern about the influence of money on political campaigns makes these extra filing requirements more important than ever.”

The Fair Elections Coalition was an informal network of civic organizations dedicated to renewing the democratic process in Cincinnati. Four organizations that were part of that 2001 Coalition, **the League of Women Voters, the Woman’s City Club, Applied Information Resources, and Common Cause/Ohio**, have now come out against the passage of Issue 46.