



Press Release:

Chris Smith' grassroots campaign for Metro passes small dollar donation milestone

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Thursday, October 1, 2020

PORTLAND - Chris Smith, candidate to represent District 5 on the Metro Council, reported passing over 500 unique individual contributors this past week. As of September 29, Smith has received contributions from 509 individuals through the primary and general elections. The median donation to Smith's campaign was \$46; 85% (429) of the donations to Smith's campaign were for \$100 or less.

Smith, a prominent backer of local campaign finance reform, has voluntarily capped his donations at \$500 each for the primary and general elections.

Conversely, his opponent in this race, Representative Mary Nolan, is relying heavily on a small number of large donations. So far, just 14 donors are funding 44% of Nolan's campaign, all of them giving more than \$1,000. By far the largest funder of Nolan's campaign to help oversee the region's urban growth boundary is the Portland Metropolitan Association of Realtors, which has so far given her \$19,000.

"Just like carbon is polluting our environment, big money is polluting Oregon's politics," said Smith. "I'm the only candidate in this race running a grassroots campaign and voluntarily limiting campaign contributions. I don't want to be beholden to economic interests that reinforce obsolete policies. I want to represent the values of the district's voters, not special interests who profit from regressive housing and climate policies."

"Status quo politicians aren't going to cut it any more," said Aaron Brown, a transportation justice advocate and endorser of Smith's campaign. "We've had too many establishment Democrats in local politics who talk big about acting on climate and racial justice but turn around and take fat checks from fracked gas, big timber and Portland's police union. We need principled, unwavering leadership at Metro, and Chris has been a principled advocate for climate action, housing affordability and transportation justice since before any of it was cool."



Before running for Metro Council, Representative Nolan served 6 terms in the state legislature and ran for Portland City Council in 2012. She took \$11,000 from the Portland Police Association while running for Council, and while serving in the legislature she took \$14,000 from corporate timber interests, \$6,500 from PGE, \$4,000 from fracked gas PACs and businesses, and \$4,000 from Phillip Morris.

“Our community is on fire. This is a climate emergency,” said Anna Kemper, Field Director for Chris for Metro and a volunteer with Sunrise Movement PDX, a local youth climate justice organization. “Chris has fought freeways, propane terminals, and for greater TriMet accountability since before some of Sunrise’s members were born. My generation can’t find affordable housing and are terrified of climate change; we certainly can’t afford more politicians who take big checks from realtors or freeway builders. Chris’ grassroots support reflects the trust he’s earned from a broad coalition of community voices after years of public service and climate advocacy. Sunrise PDX knows Chris is the best choice to fight for a Green New Deal for the region.”

Smith’s support for campaign finance reform extends back to 2000, when he chaired City Club’s study of Measure 6, which would have established public campaign financing for State races. He participated in Portland’s Voter Owned Elections when he ran for City Council in 2008, and he is a vocal supporter of Measure 107 for Fair and Honest Elections statewide. Smith is also the only candidate in this race who has taken Sunrise’s No Fossil Fuel Money pledge.

Metro, Portland’s regional government, coordinates land use, parks, and transportation policy and investments for 24 cities and three counties across the greater Portland area. Smith is running for District 5, which represents NW, N, most of NE Portland, as well as east Multnomah County’s Maywood Park and Washington County’s Cedar Mill.

Alongside Sunrise PDX, Smith has been endorsed by Representative Akasha Lawrence Spence, Metro Council President David Bragdon, community advocate Candace Avalos, primary campaign opponent Mary Peveto, Our Revolution, the Street Trust Action Fund and the Oregon League of Conservation of Voters.

Learn more about Chris’ grassroots campaign and his decades of advocacy for housing affordability and climate justice on his campaign website: www.chrisformetro.com