

Hearing on SHB 1226  
House Appropriations Committee  
January 26, 2006

**Letters Endorsing  
Section 2 of  
SHB 1226  
by**

- King County Bar Association
- American Judicature Society
- The Municipal League of King County
- Washington State Trial Lawyers Association
- Washington Defense Trial Lawyers



1200 Fifth Avenue, Suite 600  
Seattle, WA 98101

206.267.7100  
206.267.7099 fax

[www.kcba.org](http://www.kcba.org)

*Justice... Professionalism... Service... Since 1886*

January 24, 2006

Representative Helen Sommers  
House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Representative Sommers:

The Board of Trustees of the King County Bar Association unanimously supports Section 2 of Substitute House Bill 1226, to the extent it would set limits on contributions to the campaigns of candidates for the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court.

In 1996, the Washington Supreme Court's Walsh Commission strongly recommended that there should be "limits on campaign contributions by persons or organizations and aggregate limits on expenditures by a judicial candidate's campaign committee." Walsh Commission Report, p. 45 (1996). A state judge who was quoted in the Walsh Commission Report voiced the issue eloquently:

I think we have to be very careful to maintain a certain degree of judicial independence where a judge doesn't always have to be looking over his or her shoulder at the political wind that's blowing with regard to each decision – or perhaps be forced into rendering a political decision rather than a decision of justice.

*Id.*, at 44. Section 2 of House Bill 1226 goes far to make real what the Walsh Commission recommended nine years ago.

Judicial campaign contribution limits have been codified in the vast majority of States in which judges are elected. There is no question that judicial campaign contribution limits will help to: (1) preserve the nonpartisan nature of our judicial elections; (2) preserve public confidence in our judicial election system; and (3) prevent well-funded special interest groups from dominating judicial elections in our state. Thank you for your consideration of this most important measure.

Very truly yours,

Gary A. Maehara  
President

**OFFICERS**

Gary A. Maehara  
President

John R. Ruhl  
First Vice President

Eileen M. Concannon  
Second Vice President

J. Mark Weiss  
Secretary

James A. Andrus  
Treasurer

**TRUSTEES**

Joseph E. Bringman '06

Carolyn Cairns '06

Gary J. Strauss '06

Amelia J. Adair '07

Bonnie J. Glenn '07

Karen W. Murray '07

Jeffrey M. Sakoi '07

Mark J. Hillman '08

Andrew Maron '08

L. Song Richardson '08

Loretta Sue Story '08

**ABA DELEGATE**  
Peter S. Ehrlichman

**CHAIRPERSON**  
**YOUNG LAWYERS**  
**DIVISION**  
Megan E. McCloskey

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Alice C. Paine

c.c. Members, House Appropriations Committee

**AMERICAN JUDICATURE SOCIETY  
WASHINGTON CHAPTER**

*February 22, 2005*

*PRESIDENT  
Mary Wechsler*

*PRESIDENT ELECT  
Charles Wiggins*

*SECRETARY  
Lish Whitson*

*TREASURER  
Robert Mitchell*

*IMMEDIATE PAST  
PRESIDENT  
Justice Faith Ireland*

*BOARD MEMBERS  
Justice Mary Fairhurst  
Judge William Baker  
Judge Ronald Cox  
Judge Mary Alice  
Theiler  
Judge John Schultbeis*

*COMMITTEE CHAIRS  
Robert Mitchell  
Charles Wiggins  
Lish Whitson*

*WSBA LIAISON  
Gail Stone*

Rep. Helen Sommers  
PO Box 40600  
204 John L. O'Brien Bldg.  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Re: HB 1226

BY EMAIL AND 1<sup>ST</sup> CLASS MAIL

Dear Representative Sommers:


The Washington Chapter of the American Judicature Society supports Section 2 of HB 1226 which provides for campaign finance limitations in judicial campaigns. We have not taken a position on the other sections of the bill.

The American Judicature Society has a long-standing commitment to judicial selection methods that result in the highest quality judges and to judicial independence. This proposed legislation protects judicial independence.

A fair and independent judiciary is critical for our civil and criminal justice system. Whenever there have been very large and significant campaign contributions, the appearance of fairness and integrity of the system may be put in question.

Given the need for impartiality and independence and the goal of avoiding even the appearance that judges' decisions may be influenced by campaign contributions, contribution limits are at least as important for judicial elections as they are for other campaigns for public office.

Sincerely,

  
Mary Wechsler  
President, Washington Chapter  
American Judicature Society



**The Municipal League of King County**  
810 Third Avenue, Suite 224  
Seattle, WA 98104

January 25, 2005

**2004 Board of Trustees**

Rita Brogan, Chair  
Mark Troxel, Vice-Chair  
Beth M. Arman, Secretary  
Harold Taniguchi, Treasurer

Vaughnetta J. Barton  
Putnam Barber  
Jill D. Bowman  
Patricia Bowman  
Bruce Carter  
Kevin Carter  
Stephanie Cirkovich  
Peter Coates  
Chris Cooper  
Paul Demetriades  
Sandra Driscoll  
Deb Eddy  
Keven Franklin  
Mary Gates  
Norma Jean Hanson  
Andee Jorgensen  
Eric Laschever  
Robert S. Klein  
Steve Marshall  
Rob Neate  
Jennifer Piccolo  
Charles Riddell  
Tami Ritoch  
R. Todd Slind  
Lucy Steers  
Rashelle Tanner  
David Tarshes  
Kate Tate  
Philip Thompson  
Wes Uhlman  
Rich White

John Ruhl  
Chair, Task Force on Judicial Selection  
Eisenhower & Carlson, PLLC  
601 Union Street  
Suite 2830  
Seattle, WA 98101

RE: House Bill 1226, Judicial Campaign Finance Limits

Dear Mr. Ruhl:

At our January 24 Board meeting the Board of Directors of Municipal League of King County voted to strongly endorse passage of House Bill 1226, which seeks to impose campaign contribution limits on judicial campaigns comparable to those in place for other state offices. Given the need for judges to administer the law impartially and independently and the need to avoid even the appearance that judges' decisions may be influenced by campaign contributions, contribution limits are at least as important for judicial elections as for other campaigns.

Very truly yours,

Rita Brogan  
Board Chair  
Municipal League of King County

Cc: David Tarshes, Municipal League Board  
Sandra Driscoll, Municipal League Board  
Lucy Steers, Municipal League Board  
Alice Paine, King County Bar Association

RB:rh



- PRESIDENT**  
RODNEY B. RAY, Tacoma
- PRESIDENT-ELECT**  
JOHN R. CONNELLY, JR., Tacoma
- VP EAST**  
BLAINE L. TAMAKI, Yakima
- VP WEST**  
WILLIAM S. MCGONAGLE, Bainbridge Island
- VP CLE**  
KEVIN COLUCCIO, Seattle
- SECOND VP CLE**  
MATTHEW G. KNOPP, Seattle
- VP DEVELOPMENT**  
CAROL N. JOHNSTON, Bainbridge Island
- SECOND VP DEVELOPMENT**  
ARTIS C. GRANT, JR., Tacoma
- VP FINANCE**  
STANLEY J. RUMBAUGH, Tacoma
- VP JUDICIAL RELATIONS**  
PATRICIA A. WILLNER, Bellevue
- SECOND VP JUDICIAL RELATIONS**  
REBECCA ROE, Seattle
- VP LEGISLATIVE**  
DEBORAH NELSON WILLIS, Port Angeles
- SECOND VP LEGISLATIVE**  
KAREN K. KOEHLER, Seattle
- VP MEMBERSHIP**  
PATRICK A. PALACE, Tacoma
- SECOND VP MEMBERSHIP**  
THADDEUS MARTIN, Tacoma
- VP PUBLIC AFFAIRS**  
STEPHEN L. BUZOMI, Tacoma
- SECOND VP PUBLIC AFFAIRS**  
KENNETH H. COLEMAN, Spokane
- VP PUBLICATIONS**  
JUDITH A. LONNGQUIST, Seattle
- SECRETARY**  
MARC L. SILVERMAN, Bellevue
- TREASURER**  
LOUIE V. DELORIE, JR., Yakima
- EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
BRADFORD J. FULTON, Everett
- 1ST CONG. DISTRICT**  
JOSEPH M. CUNNANE, Edmonds  
JANE A. MORROW, Seattle
- 2ND CONG. DISTRICT**  
CARRIE COPPINGER CARTER, Bellingham  
TODD C. NICHOLS, Everett
- 3RD CONG. DISTRICT**  
LOREN ETENGOFF, Vancouver  
TERRI L. HERRING-PUZ, Tacoma
- 4TH CONG. DISTRICT**  
STEVEN C. LACY, East Wenatchee  
STEVEN DEFOE, Kennewick
- 5TH CONG. DISTRICT**  
MARK D. KAMTOMO, Spokane  
RICHARD E. LEWIS, Spokane
- 6TH CONG. DISTRICT**  
JOHN J. DURKIN, Tacoma  
JONATHAN F. STUBBS, Tacoma
- 7TH CONG. DISTRICT**  
MICHAEL R. CARYL, Seattle  
MARY K. FLECK, Seattle
- 8TH CONG. DISTRICT**  
STEVEN C. LINGENBRINK, Kirkland  
SIDNEY S. ROYER, Seattle
- 9TH CONG. DISTRICT**  
SUSAN MACHLER, Seattle  
KATHLEEN GARVIN, Renton
- AT-LARGE**  
VIRGINIA L. DECOSTA, Tacoma  
JOHN C. PEICK, Bellevue  
JERRILYNN HADLEY, Bellevue
- IMMEDIATE PAST-PRESIDENT**  
JUDY MASSONG, Seattle
- PAST-PRESIDENTS' COUNCIL**  
STEVEN G. TOOLE, Bellevue
- ATLA BOARD OF GOVERNORS**  
MARIA S. DIAMOND, Seattle  
PATRICK H. LEPLEY, Bellevue  
MICHAEL E. WITHEY, Seattle
- ATLA STATE DELEGATES**  
ROBERT K. DAWSON, Seattle  
STEVEN P. KRAFCHICK, Seattle

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
GERHARD LETZING

**GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DIRECTOR**  
LARRY SHANNON

Lawyers working to protect the safety of Washington's families



February 2, 2005

Alice C. Paine  
Executive Director  
King County Bar Association  
1200 Fifth Avenue; Suite 600  
Seattle, WA 98101

Re: Legislation extending campaign contribution limits to judicial campaigns

Dear Ms. Payne,

I am pleased to advise you that the Board of Directors of the Washington State Trial Lawyers Association has voted to endorse Section 2 of HB 1226 that would extend campaign contribution limits to judicial campaigns. It became abundantly clear in the November 2004 elections that massive amounts of special interest money is now being funneled into judicial campaigns. Although judicial candidates are not supposed to know who contributes to their campaigns, it is clear that such large contributions do not go unnoticed. This undermines the independence of the judiciary and the public trust thereof.

Judges are supposed to administer the law impartially and independently. Campaign finance limitations along the lines of the limitations currently applied to legislative and executive office campaigns should help to reduce the influence of large organizational contributors and restore public trust in the electoral process and the judicial branch of our government.

As a group of over 3,500 members, many of whom practice in the district, superior and appellate courts of the State of Washington, WSTLA is pleased to join the Washington State Bar Association, the Municipal League of King County, and the Washington Defense Trial Lawyers Association in endorsing Section 2 of HB 1226.

Sincerely,

Rodney B. Ray  
President, WSTLA

1809 7th Ave., #1500  
Seattle, WA 98101-1328  
(206) 464-1011  
FAX (206) 464-0703  
wstla@wstla.org

910 N. Washington #100  
Spokane, WA 99201  
(509) 326-6660  
FAX (509) 326-5111  
spokane@wstla.org

1511 State Ave. N.E.  
Olympia, WA 98506-4552  
(360) 786-9100  
FAX (360) 786-9103  
govaffairs@wstlaoly.org

Web site:  
www.wstla.org  
www.trustjuries.org

**PRESIDENT**

Jeffrey Frank, Seattle  
Bullivant Houser Bailey  
(206) 292-8930  
jeff.frank@bullivant.com

**PRESIDENT-ELECT**

Jill Haavig Stone, Tacoma  
Burgess Fitzer  
(253) 572-5324  
jills@burgessfitzer.com

**SECRETARY**

Michelle Menely, Seattle  
Gordon Thomas Honeywell  
(206) 676-7500  
mmenely@gth-law.com

**TREASURER**

Steve Stocker, Spokane  
Stamper, Rubens, Stocker & Smith, P.S.  
(509) 326-4800  
sstocker@stamperlaw.com

**TRUSTEES**

Tim Ashcraft, Tacoma  
Jillian Barron, Bellevue  
Anne Bremner, Seattle  
Ted Buck, Seattle  
Jeffrey Downer, Seattle  
Jesse Franklin, Seattle  
Sue Holm, Seattle  
Carin Marney, Seattle  
Rick Roberts, Seattle  
Mark Scheer, Seattle  
Emilia Sweeney, Seattle  
Craig Watson, Seattle

**DRI State Representative**

**Board Advisor**

Jeff Tilden, Seattle

**Executive Director**

Kristin Baldwin, Seattle  
(206) 749-0319  
kristin@wdtl.org

**Past Presidents**

Joanne T. Blackburn • James S. Berg •  
Bradley A. Maxa • Roy A. Umlauf •  
Andrew G. Cooley • James E. Macpherson •  
Aurie D. Kohli • Peter J. Johnson • William R.  
Phillips • Mary H. Spillane • Jeffrey I. Tilden  
Michael H. Runyan • Palmer Robinson  
J. Richard Crockett • Ronald B. Leighton  
William J. Leedom • Robert L. Iarsel  
John J. Soltyz • F. Ross Burgess  
Robert C. Keating • H. Graham Geiser  
William H. Mays • Daniel E. Tolfree  
Richard B. Johnson • Charles A. Kimbrough  
Frederick V. Betts • R. Jack Stephenson  
John G. Bergmann • Harold C. Fosso  
Martin T. Crowder • Gene H. Knapp, Jr.  
William L. Parker • Michael Mines  
Fred R. Butterworth • Frank H. Roberts  
Charles E. Peery • Arthur R. Hart  
Robert P. Piper • Roy J. Mocerri  
F. Lee Campbell • Hoyt Wilbanks  
Jack P. Scholfield

February 1, 2005

State Government Operations  
and Accountability Committee  
Attn: Rep. Haigh

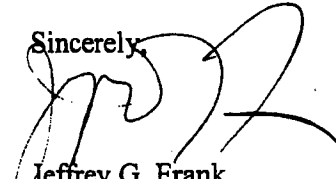
RE: HB 1226 - Judicial Campaign Contribution

Dear Chairperson Haigh and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Washington Defense Trial Lawyers to endorse Section 2 of House Bill 1226 which provides for limitations on campaign contributions for individuals running for judicial positions within the State of Washington. A non partisan judiciary is the hallmark of our civil and criminal justice system. Whenever there is an opportunity for significant campaign contributions, the appearance of fairness and integrity of the system may be put in question.

Our Board members and members at large are prepared to assist in moving this bill forward through the House and Senate. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey G. Frank  
WDTL President

cc: John H. Ruhl