



Chair Jim Carlson
3221 Minnesota Senate Bldg
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Carlson and Senate Elections Committee members,

My name is Katie Cashman and I serve Ward 7 on the Minneapolis City Council. I write in support of Senate File 3942 authorizing a public financing program for local candidates in Minnesota.

Because of the continually rising costs of running a successful campaign, candidates find themselves chasing larger, capable donors in order to have a shot at running for office. This takes time and money away from what a candidate really wants to be doing – spending time at the doors of everyday people asking for their vote and support, and listening to their concerns. I ran as a first time candidate for City Council in 2023, and would have greatly preferred to hold real-time conversations with my voters rather than phone conversations with donors soliciting funds. But with the ever-increasing amount of raising and spending, prioritizing collecting donations became a requirement for my campaign at times.

This legislation would give Minneapolis and other local jurisdictions the choice to have a voluntary public financing program, helping candidates like myself prioritize engaging with our neighbors. At the same time, future constituents will have increased faith in the election system, knowing that candidates are more accountable to them. Public financing has also been proven to open the door to more diverse candidates, including women, people of color, young people, and renters who have historically been out-raised by candidates with facilitated access to large donors and wealthy special interests¹.

As Councilmember, I work to ensure the safety of our neighborhoods, address housing affordability, invest in climate solutions, and support Ward 7 residents. A public financing option would allow for increased attention and availability to these important issues, and less time on the phones raising competitive funds.

I urge members of the Senate Elections Committee to vote in favor of this bill.

Thank you,

Katie Cashman
Minneapolis City Council, Ward 7

¹ Brennan Center, "[Faces of Small Donor Public Financing](#)", November 2021.