



Chair Arvon Perteet
Vice-Chair Ryan Micik
Commissioner Charlotte Hill
Commissioner Joseph Tuman
Commissioner Francis Upton IV

December 12, 2022

Dear Commissioners,

Oakland Rising educates and mobilizes voters in the flatlands to speak up for and take charge of the issues impacting our lives. We are a multilingual, multiracial collaborative of eight social justice organizations with deep roots in East and West Oakland, proving that residents working together have the power to change how our city is run. Our base includes 25% of Oakland's voters – or 61,000 new, occasional and unlikely voters – who join us to fight together around policies and governance that advance smart, community-first solutions for a thriving city.

I am writing to ask you to prioritize and expedite the hiring of the Public Ethics Commission's next executive director. As a trusted community-led body, we find it vital to have leadership in place to ensure equitable democracy, especially for our most marginalized residents living in Oakland's flatlands.

Oakland Rising is a core member of the Bay Area Political Equality Collaborative, and as such, we appeared before you in April to seek your input and your support of the Fair Elections Act which was placed on the ballot as Measure W. Over the course of 2022, we along with our 501c4 sister organization, Oakland Rising Action, spoke with over 9,000 new and infrequent voters in East and West Oakland about how this measure would create a more participatory, responsive, and accountable local democracy. We are very pleased to be contacting you again now that more than 70 percent of voters approved the Measure in Oakland's recent election.

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OUR PARTNERS

Asian Pacific Environmental Network • Causa Justa :: Just Cause • East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy

Ella Baker Center for Human Rights • Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice • St. Mary's Center Parent Voices •

The PEC will lead implementation. We and others in our coalition will support your efforts and those of the Commission staff in any ways you deem helpful. We plan to attend PEC meetings so we can stay aware of your process and be ready to engage.

The Fair Elections Act is game changing legislation. It will bring an unprecedented measure of transparency and equity to Oakland elections. You may have seen from the post-election coverage, that analysts and advocates of small donor financing programs across the country and throughout California have their eyes on Oakland. Success here will confirm that a Democracy Dollars program can support candidates without ties to large donors and dramatically boost participation in our elections by residents of all classes, races, ages and ethnicities.

Unfortunately, you have to take the first steps toward implementation without a permanent executive director in place despite your recruiting efforts earlier this year. We urge you to make recruitment a top priority and to use all available means, including employing a search firm, to expedite your work. We have begun disseminating the recently posted job description among our networks. In that regard, we respectfully also suggest that you consider extending the timeline for responses beyond early January due to the difficulty of recruiting in the holiday timeframe.

Members of our coalition have worked for years to reach this point and are very committed to making Oakland's program a resounding success. Effective implementation is important for Oakland and for the other cities in California and nationwide who hope to learn by our example.

We hope you are as excited as we are to do this work. It is an opportunity to make meaningful and fundamental change in our local democratic processes.

Sincerely,

liz suk
Executive Director, Oakland Rising