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Albuquerque Voters Overwhelmingly Support Voter-Owned Elections Million-dollar Mayoral Race Spurs Win in New Mexico

Salem, Ore -- New Mexico's largest city, Albuquerque, joined Portland and six states in adopting full public financing reform in a decisive 69 percent victory Tuesday on a city charter amendment.

"Albuquerque's new public financing system mirrors the Voter-Owned Elections reform recently enacted in Portland - and voters got it. They know they benefit from campaign finance reform that limits spending, increases competition, and levels the playing field," said Andi Miller, executive director of Common Cause Oregon, who joined her New Mexico colleagues on the campaign trail.

Albuquerque's two major daily newspapers, as well as its two alternative weeklies, endorsed that city's charter amendment. A \$1.1 million dollar mayoral candidate contributed to voter's support for comprehensive reform.

Just as in Portland, the Albuquerque system sets a rigorous threshold so only serious candidates with broad support can qualify by collecting a large number of \$5 qualifying contributions. After qualifying, candidates raise no private money and agree to strict regulations on allowed campaign spending. In return, candidates receive limited amounts of public dollars. Violations are addressed with severe fines and return of the funding.

"The decisive Albuquerque vote demonstrates that people understand the cost of our current campaign system in terms of favors to big-money contributors," summarized Miller. "The public sees that Voter-Owned Elections are cost-effective and put voters back in the driver's seat."

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