



For Immediate Release
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Anna Kellar
207-831-6223

Voters Submit Signatures to Qualify Fair Elections Portland for the 2019 Ballot

*Charter Amendments Will Increase Accountability and Representation in City
Government*

Portland - Dozens of Portland voters gathered at Portland City Hall this afternoon to announce the successful collection of a record-setting 16,680 signatures to qualify two charter amendments for the November ballot. After a brief press conference, the group delivered boxes of petitions to the City Clerk's office.

"We are here to celebrate a remarkable and important citizen-led effort to keep our local government accessible to the people of Portland," said Anna Kellar, Fair Elections Portland Chair. "This is an effort of, by and for Portland people. We're here today because we want a government that works for everyday voters, not one bought and paid for by wealthy special interests. We're here today because when our democracy is threatened, we the people, will fight to keep it strong."

Joining Kellar were several voters who volunteered on the signature-gathering effort.

“Portland people were eager to sign. We want local government to be about good ideas and neighbors working for neighbors, not who can raise the most money from wealthy groups or individuals with agendas at City Hall. The cost of running for office in Portland is sky-rocketing. A parent should be able to run for school board without being wealthy or politically-prominent,” said Maria Testa.

“Portland residents expressed a lot of enthusiasm at the idea of giving more equal access to local races. Clean Elections allows more opportunity for more voices of the community to be heard and take those leadership opportunities,” said April Fournier.

Fair Elections Portland seeks to strengthen the voices of the people in Portland by reducing the influence of big money in local campaigns and ensuring that elected officials represent a true majority of voters.

Volunteers collected signatures on two charter amendments that seek to:

- **Establish a [public funding system](#) for school board, city council, and mayoral candidates**, stemming the tide of big money’s influence and enabling more candidates to run competitive races.
- **Expand [Ranked Choice Voting](#) to school board and city council races**, ensuring winning candidates represent a true majority of voters.

To qualify each charter amendment for the ballot, a minimum of 6,816 valid signatures from Portland voters are required.

The Fair Elections Portland effort has been endorsed by Maine Citizens for Clean Elections, the League of Women Voters of Maine, and the Southern Maine Democratic Socialists of America.