



March 23, 2021

To: Senate Rules & Administration Committee
Senator Amy Klobuchar, Chair
Senator Roy Blunt, Ranking Member
Senator Jeff Merkley, Sponsor

RE: Opposition to S1, A bill to expand Americans' access to the ballot box, reduce the influence of big money in politics, strengthen ethics rules for public servants, and implement other anti-corruption measures for the purpose of fortifying our democracy, and for other purposes.

As a non-profit organization, the Alaska Policy Forum is very concerned about the assault on free speech and the dangers our donors will face if this proposed legislation is adopted. The federal government's responsibility when it comes to the rights of American citizens is to protect those rights, not make them more difficult, costly, and dangerous to exercise. Civil political discourse is already a rarity in our country; the IRS has already been used to target certain organizations based solely on political beliefs; and politicians and other citizens are already brazenly harassed by people who disagree with them. We do not need more of this type of behavior - we need less of it. Participation by American citizens in the legislative process should be encouraged, but the provisions in S1 will expose supporters of non-profit policy organizations to public disclosure of their personal information, making them vulnerable to intimidation and violence, resulting in less interest in participatory government. This will detrimentally affect non-profit policy organizations whose sole existence is to educate and influence policy makers as well as the general public. We rely on the generosity of like-minded donors who support our cause but do not necessarily want to be in the public eye. Having their identifying information and donor amounts will seriously curtail the fundraising of non-profits across all ends of the political spectrum. In this light, we strongly oppose S1.

Timothy A. Barto
Vice President of External Affairs
Alaska Policy Forum