

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Directors and Staff

FROM: Brian Schmidt

SUBJECT: Board Member Request to review models for limiting the role of money in future Water District elections

DATE: October 10, 2014

Given recent news of extremely large amounts of money being spent in elections for the Water District, possibly a state-level record for any water district, I am bringing back an issue I raised before last year of investigating ways to limit the role of money in future Water District elections.

Staff's previous research concluded that some limitations might require large administrative costs for the District to ensure compliance. This new request asks staff to look at existing models in Santa Clara County and elsewhere that avoid large administrative costs. One example could be Mountain View's Voluntary Expenditure Limits combined with partial reimbursement of certain fees paid by candidates to the government as part of the election process. I would request staff consider other options as well.

As we have seen very appropriate criticism and reform of the role of unlimited money in almost all other types of non-special-district elections, this request looks to opportunities for similar reform at the Water District in its future elections.