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To the Editor:

A number of recent letters have called S.278, the campaign finance bill, unconstitutional because parts of previous legislation were struck down by the Supreme Court. In fact, although the Court found VT's contribution limits too low, the *concept* of contribution limits was upheld, and several states have lower limits than those of S.278. This year's bill was carefully crafted to address the concerns of the Supreme Court.

Governor Douglas believes that the provisions of S.278 favor incumbents. To the contrary, before the bill was passed, legislators heard convincing evidence that contribution limits make elections MORE competitive, not less. For instance, data that Prof. Tony Gierzynski (UVM) presented to the House Government Operations committee showed that the elections that took place when VT had the lowest contribution limits in the country saw more incumbents lose than in elections before or since.

The League of Women Voters of Vermont finds the limitations on contributions prescribed by the bill to be far from prohibiting an effective political campaign in this small state: a single source may give up to \$40,000 to directly influence the outcome of elections; there is an exception for contributions from the candidate's immediate family; contributions for the purpose of advocating public question positions are exempted; and the contribution limits are indexed to inflation using the Consumer Price Index.

S.278 is constitutional, reasonable and fair. Ask your legislators to override the Governor's veto of this important legislation.

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