



Written Testimony of Jason Snead
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House Bill 1467—Proponent
Indiana Senate Elections Committee
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Chairman Gaskill, Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on House Bill 1467. My name is Jason Snead, executive director of Honest Elections Project Action, a nonprofit group fighting for the right of every American to vote in free and fair elections.

House Bill 1467 is a straightforward measure to ban foreign funding in campaigns to influence public questions. This year alone, 14 states have introduced similar measures. Kansas lawmakers passed a bill last week with near-unanimous support, and Wyoming enacted one earlier this year. Here in Indiana, HB 1467 passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support, putting Indiana on the path to protecting the integrity of your constitution from foreign interference.

This is no hypothetical concern. In states across the country, millions of dollars in foreign-tied funds have been spent to influence the outcome of state ballot measures. This torrent of funding is tied to a Swiss billionaire activist named Hansjorg Wyss.¹ As the watchdog group Americans for Public Trust points out, Wyss has put almost \$300 million into a left-wing group called the Sixteen Thirty Fund, which in turn has spent a staggering \$130 million driving ballot measures to promote abortion and rewrite election laws for partisan political gain, or to defeat measures referred to the voters by state legislatures.²

Everyone ought to agree that decisions as significant as amending the constitution belong exclusively in the hands of the citizens of this country and the voters of this state. Foreign nationals have no business influencing ballot measures, and these campaigns should not be allowed to serve as a Trojan Horse for foreign interference in the American democratic process.

Unfortunately, that is precisely what the ballot measure process has become. Federal law has long banned foreign nationals from donating to candidates and super PACs, but that prohibition does not extend to ballot measures, including legislative referrals. And as the Sixteen Thirty Fund has shown, it is alarmingly easy to exploit this loophole and launder foreign money into ballot measure contests through intermediary groups. In fact, there is no reason to believe that Sixteen Thirty Fund is alone in this. Recent reporting has revealed that money tied to China is flowing into U.S. environmental nonprofits, a pattern of giving very similar to Wyss and the Sixteen Thirty Fund.³

¹ “Wyss’ nonprofit showered liberal groups with more than \$63M,” February 16, 2024, [Politico](#).

² “Swiss billionaire Hansjorg Wyss, 89, bankrolling US ‘working families’ group opposed to Trump tax cuts,” March 13, 2025, [New York Post](#). See also, [Americans for Public Trust](#).

³ Thomas Catenacci and Joe Schoffstall, “CCP-tied group is quietly fueling US-based climate initiatives: tax filings,” [Fox News](#), 12/18/23. Thomas Catenacci, “Ex-CCP Officials Funneled Millions to US Universities, Nonprofits To Promote Green Energy, Tax Forms Show,” December 10, 2024, [Washington Free Beacon](#).



It is time to close that loophole. Other states have witnessed the danger of delay. Prior to 2023, the Sixteen Thirty Fund had spent very little on ballot measures in Ohio. Then, in just one year, the group poured nearly \$14 million into the state, followed by roughly \$7 million more on ballot measures in 2024.

HB 1467 does just that. To be effective, legislation banning foreign funding for ballot measures should do several things.

First, states must ban both direct *and indirect* foreign contributions to ballot measure campaigns. Wyss and the Sixteen Thirty Fund have shown how easy it is for a foreign national to launder his funding through third party groups. Moreover, an effective ban should be designed to prevent groups from laundering large sums of foreign money into campaigns by accepting and using foreign donations for other purposes that free up resources for ballot measure contributions. A clear way to accomplish this is to require donors certify they have not received more than a specified amount of foreign funding over a time period prior to the contribution (such as \$100,000 over a four-year period).

Second, the same protections mentioned above must be applied to independent expenditure campaigns, as well. It does little good to institute a ban if foreign nationals and foreign-financed organizations can simply pivot their funding into an independent expenditure campaign instead.

Third, the ban must apply to foreign nationals. Many existing state laws against foreign funding for state candidates apply only to foreign governments or political parties.⁴ Foreign influence over the ballot measure process is toxic no matter whether it originates from a hostile foreign power or an activist billionaire like Hansjorg Wyss.

Finally, it is important to recognize that cutting off foreign influence in ballot issues in no way implicates or limits the privacy rights of American donors. The intent here is to protect the democratic process, not weaken it by exposing Americans who wish to engage in lawful First Amendment speech while remaining anonymous.

HB 1467 would make great strides towards safeguarding the integrity of Indiana's elections against foreign influence. I strongly encourage you to advance this commonsense bill.

⁴ "Laws governing foreign spending in ballot measure campaigns," [Ballotpedia](#), accessed 1/31/25.