



**Written Testimony of Jason Snead**  
**Executive Director, Honest Elections Project Action**  
**House Bill 590—Proponent**  
**Louisiana House and Governmental Affairs Committee**  
**April 23, 2025**

Chairman Beaulieu, Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on House Bill 590. 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 590 is a straightforward measure to protect Louisiana’s elections from foreign influence by banning foreign support for election administration, political candidates, and for campaigns designed to influence ballot propositions. By passing this bill, you will ensure that Louisiana law mirrors longstanding federal laws prohibiting foreign contribution to political candidates and PACs. And critically, you will close a loophole that *permits* those same foreign nationals to contribute to ballot measure campaigns aimed at rewriting the constitution of this state.

States across the country are taking action to close that foreign influence loophole. This year alone, Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, and Wyoming have enacted laws protecting the ballot measure process from foreign interference, while Tennessee lawmakers have sent measures to their governors. Altogether, more than 15 states have introduced such bills.

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.

Yet, as we speak, one of the largest funders of ballot measure campaigns nationwide, a group called the Sixteen Thirty Fund, has taken \$280 million from a Swiss billionaire named Hansjorg Wyss.<sup>1</sup> This group has simultaneously spent \$130 million to influence the outcome of initiatives and legislatively referred measures in 26 states.<sup>2</sup> This single group has funded a range of measures, from promoting abortion to rewriting election laws for partisan political gain, and has spent heavily to defeat measures referred to the voters by state legislatures.

The Sixteen Thirty Fund has proven it is alarmingly easy to exploit gaps in our laws 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

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

<sup>2</sup> “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](#).



money tied to China is flowing into U.S. environmental nonprofits, a pattern of giving very similar to Wyss and the Sixteen Thirty Fund.<sup>3</sup>

It is time to close that loophole. Other states have witnessed the danger of delay. Last year, Ohio closed this foreign funding loophole, but not before the Sixteen Thirty Fund poured roughly \$20 million into the state. Prior to 2023, the Sixteen Thirty Fund had spent very little there. Then, the money flooded in.

HB 590 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 these campaigns. But, to be maximally effective, states should *also* bar groups that accept large sums of foreign money from simultaneously contributing to support ballot measure campaigns. Other states have done this by establishing a threshold, such as \$100,000 in foreign funding over a four year period,

Second, these same protections should be applied to independent expenditures, to avoid creating a loophole.

Third, a ban must apply to foreign nationals, as HB 590 does. It is not enough to target foreign governments or political parties alone. Foreign meddling is toxic no matter whether it originates from the Chinese government or from a foreign activist like Hansjorg Wyss.

Finally, it is important to note that banning foreign influence over constitutional amendments and related ballot questions in no way implicates the privacy rights of American donors. Nor will it excessively burden campaigns.

HB 590 would make great strides towards safeguarding the integrity of elections in Louisiana against foreign influence. States across America are taking action to root out foreign influence. I strongly encourage you to advance HB 590 and make Louisiana the next state to stop foreign influence in elections.

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<sup>3</sup> 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](#).