

## **Akron campaign law to take effect**

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Plain Dealer Reporter

Akron- Strict campaign- contribution limits took another step toward being implemented here yesterday.

U.S. District Court Judge Dan Polster told lawyers in the campaign case that he would remove an injunction that has prevented the new limits from taking effect, the lawyers said.

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Polster had originally ruled that the limits were unconstitutional, but the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overruled him. The U.S. Supreme Court this week declined to hear an appeal, thereby upholding the 6th Circuit decision.

The campaign limits mean candidates for Akron mayor and citywide City Council seats can accept a maximum of \$300 per contributor. Candidates seeking ward seats could accept a maximum of \$100 per donor.

Candidates have previously been permitted to accept unlimited contributions.

"It's time to get big money out of politics," said Brian Williams, a lawyer who represented residents seeking the contribution limits. "Let people vote for candidates based on their qualifications, not because of how much money they have."

Williams said he and Bob Gippin, a lawyer representing residents who opposed the campaign contribution limits, spoke yesterday with Polster.

Later Gippin said the case may not be over.

"As far as we're concerned, lifting the injunction doesn't end the case," Gippin said. "We're determining what briefing to give to the court."

Gippin is free to file as many motions as he wants with the court, but Polster indicated yesterday that - barring the introduction of startling new facts - the case was over, Williams said.

Polster could not be reached for comment.

Critics of the limits have argued that they are unconstitutional, preventing candidates from exercising freedom of speech because they could fall short of amassing enough money to adequately promote their campaign themes and messages. They have also noted that the new law may favor incumbents - who are often well-known while challengers often must spend much money to get their name known to voters - and wealthy candidates who can spend loads on a campaign from their own wallet.

Williams said it will be up to the city to establish provisions for enforcing the new campaign contribution limits.

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