

**Campaign Legal Center • Common Cause • Democracy 21
People For the American Way • League of Women Voters
Public Citizen • U.S. PIRG**

July 16, 2010

Dear Senator Brown,

We are writing to respond to your letter of July 14, 2010 regarding the DISCLOSE Act.

Our organizations include the Campaign Legal Center, Common Cause, Democracy 21, People For the American Way, the League of Women Voters, Public Citizen and U.S. PIRG.

The 2010 congressional elections are expected to involve hundreds of millions of dollars being spent by corporations, labor unions, advocacy groups and trade associations to influence the voters' decisions. Voters have a basic right to know who is behind the money being spent in their elections, as the Supreme Court made clear in the *Citizens United* decision.

You have stressed the importance of government transparency and accountability in the past, so we are understandably puzzled by your response indicating you would not vote for the DISCLOSE bill, without which voters will not be able to know who is financing the flood of campaign ads expected during the 2010 congressional elections.

You indicated in your letter that you think we should wait until after the 2010 elections to address new campaign finance laws. However, the effort to get the DISCLOSE Act enacted in time for the 2010 congressional races, which we strongly support, is driven by the need for immediate remedial legislation in light of the *Citizens United* decision earlier this year. Our concern with the delay you suggest is that it would deprive the voters of critical campaign finance information they need to know regarding the 2010 congressional races.

It was the Supreme Court that changed the rules in the middle of the game and opened the door for corporations, labor unions, advocacy groups and trade associations to make campaign expenditures in the 2010 congressional elections without meaningful disclosure. The Court's ruling in the *Citizens United* case created the need to pass the legislation this year.

We also strongly believe the DISCLOSE Act is not partisan legislation in its substance, timing, application or need. It is fair legislation that establishes new, comprehensive campaign finance disclosure rules for corporations, labor unions, advocacy groups and trade associations. It is legislation that serves the interests of the American people.

We are well aware that the legislation as passed by the House is not perfect. We renew our request that you work with Senate supporters of the DISCLOSE Act to resolve the differences you have with the legislation and that you support the passage of the Act. This is an

approach which you have appropriately taken as a Senator with a number of other bills, consistent with your stated position of wanting to bring an independent voice to Washington.

Our organizations strongly urge you to continue your commitment to “accountability and transparency” in government by working to obtain a DISCLOSE Act that you can support, and by opposing any efforts to kill the disclosure legislation by a filibuster.

We do not believe the American people should be denied the wealth of important new campaign finance information that the DISCLOSE Act will provide and that citizens are entitled to receive. Swift passage of the DISCLOSE Act will ensure that citizens have essential campaign finance information about who is spending money to influence the 2010 congressional races.

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