



How You Can Have an Impact During the August Recess

Thank you for pledging to visit your representative during the August recess. Here is what you can do to have an impact this summer:

- Find your representative's local office by going to his or her official website. The site should have addresses and contact information for all of the representative's offices.
- Sign the cover letter included in the left folder pocket. Include your address so your member of Congress knows where to address a response.
- Visit your member's office to deliver this lobby packet. Tell the front desk staff person that you are a constituent, and that you would like your representative to support the legislation discussed in the packet.

That's all! The following additional tips are optional, but can make your visit more impactful.

- Take some time to customize your packet. We included a blank note that you can use to explain why a particular piece of legislation matters to you. You can also use this note to thank your representative if he or she already co-sponsors a piece of legislation. You can use this website to look up a bill's current co-sponsors (thomas.loc.gov).
- Before you visit your member's office, call ahead and try to schedule a meeting with your representative or a member of his or her staff. Be persistent! Your member's schedule is likely to be packed. When you call it is helpful to ask to speak with your member's scheduler.
- If you do get a meeting, break the ice with a bit a small talk, but keep in mind that the meeting is likely to only last 10 or 15 minutes. Be friendly, but quickly get to the purpose of the meeting. The person you're meeting with may disagree with you. Be polite, but firm in your support for the bills. If you don't know the answer to a question, let the person know you can find out the answer and follow up. Feel free to bring a friend along to share your experience or help take notes. Always inform the office if a group will be attending.
- Always follow up. Even if you don't get a meeting, ask the person at the front desk for an email address you can contact to send a thank you note. Email your representative and ask if he or she has decided to co-sponsor any of the legislation. Follow up via phone to see if the office needs any more information, or to answer a question you may have left unanswered during your meeting or visit.

If you have any questions about the visit or any of the legislation, please contact us at action@citizen.org. We would also love to get a report back from you on how your visit went. Please make sure the subject line of any email you send us is "August Action".

Constitutional Amendment to Overturn *Citizens United* and *McCutcheon* (H.J. Res. 119)

Lead sponsor: Rep. Ted Deutch (D-Fla.)
Co-sponsors: 116

The Problem

The Supreme Court's rulings in *Citizens United* and *McCutcheon* have unleashed a flood of money into the political system from corporations, special interests and the super-rich. Total campaign spending reached a record-breaking \$7 billion dollars in the 2012 federal election, and spending by outside groups soared as corporations and wealthy special interests laundered campaign money through innocuous-sounding groups like Americans for Job Security and Crossroads GPS, with the sources of much of this money undisclosed to the public.

At the same time, unprecedented gridlock has gripped Washington, causing Americans to lose faith that their government is working for them. Lawmakers are unable to serve the public interest if they believe millions of corporate donations will go into defeating them in the next election. And, as elections become more and more expensive, the barrier to candidates who are not independently wealthy becomes much higher, limiting the diversity of candidates and drowning out important voices.

By a 5-1 margin, Americans agree that, "there would be less corruption if there were limits on how much could be given to super PACs." Nine in 10 Americans agree that there is too much corporate money in politics.

The Solution

A constitutional amendment is the only long-term way to overcome the profound challenges to our democracy posed by *Citizens United* and *McCutcheon*. H.J. Res. 119 simply states that Congress and the states have the power to regulate the raising and spending of money in elections, including the authority to distinguish between natural persons and artificial entities when drawing our campaign finance laws, in the interest of advancing political equality.

More than 2 million people have signed a petition in support of the amendment, and 16 states and the District of Columbia have called for an amendment.

What You Can Do

On behalf of myself and Public Citizen, a consumer interest organization with more than 300,000 members nationwide, I ask that you co-sponsor H.J. Res. 119. We believe that if we are to have a democracy that serves all Americans, Congress must be able to put reasonable limits on the ability of corporations and special interests to influence lawmakers through campaign contributions and expenditures.



21st Century Glass-Steagall Act of 2013 (H.R. 3711)

Lead sponsor: Rep. John Tierney (D-Mass.)

Co-sponsors: 12

The Problem

In 1999 Congress repealed a crucial safeguard that had been in place since the Great Depression — the Glass-Steagall Act. Within the decade, Wall Street's recklessness crashed the economy yet again and everyday Americans are still paying the price. Without restoring this commonsense safeguard, the next financial meltdown — and subsequent round of Big Bank bailouts — is almost inevitable.

For nearly a century, the Glass-Steagall Act required banks insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) to keep high-risk investment and trading activities separate from commercial banking activities — things like managing checking and savings accounts. But Glass-Steagall's repeal gave banks a green light to take risky bets with taxpayer-insured deposits.

During the peak of the financial crisis, the U.S. Treasury loaned trillions of taxpayer dollars to prop up financial institutions they deemed to be critical to the functioning of the economy, or “too big to fail.” Though there are new limits on when and how bailouts can happen in the future, the assumption of government intervention creates a perverse incentive for banks to behave recklessly.

The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, passed in the wake of the financial crisis, includes a provision called the Volcker rule, which attempts to rebuild the firewall between speculation and commercial banking. However, the size and complexity of our financial markets will make it difficult for overburdened regulators to adequately enforce the law. A return to a clear separation of commercial and investment banking is the best guard against too-big-too-fail banks.

The Solution

The **21st Century Glass-Steagall Act** would solve this problem by requiring federally insured banks to separate their high-risk tinkering with complex financial instruments — derivatives, hedge funds and the like — from their ordinary commercial banking activities used by working families — checking, savings, loans and other banking services.

What You Can Do

On behalf of myself and Public Citizen, a consumer interest organization with more than 300,000 members nationwide, I ask that you co-sponsor H.R. 3711. We believe that the 21st Century Glass-Steagall Act is crucial to a stable financial system and an important safeguard against too-big-to-fail banks that put hardworking Americans at risk.



Expanded & Improved Medicare For All Act (H.R. 676)

Lead sponsor: Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.)

Co-sponsors: 59

The Problem

While the Affordable Care Act (“Obamacare”) took us a step in the right direction toward covering more Americans, more than 29 million Americans are expected to remain uninsured after its implementation.

Uninsured Americans are vulnerable, not only to catastrophic medical emergencies, but also to medical bankruptcies, which are a significant economic drag on individuals and struggling communities. The United States’ infant mortality rate (6.81 deaths per 1,000 live births) trails dismally behind the rest of the industrialized world.

Meanwhile, the chaotic, often unreliable, and incomplete system of employer-based healthcare wastefully siphons hundreds of billions away from our federal government. American taxpayers are paying more for their federal health care system than citizens of any other advanced democracy, yet getting far less in return.

The Solution

The **Expanded & Improved Medicare For All Act** would improve the Medicare system and expand it to cover the entire U.S. population.

A single-payer, Medicare for all system would provide universal coverage for all Americans and eliminate the wasteful administrative costs of the private, for-profit health insurance industry, saving an estimated \$400 billion in federal taxpayer dollars annually.

What You Can Do

On behalf of myself and Public Citizen, a public interest organization with more than 300,000 members and activists nationwide, I ask that you co-sponsor H.R. 676. We believe health care is a human right, and that the benefits of universal coverage by far exceed any advantages of our current wasteful and incomplete system.



Oppose A Tax Repatriation Holiday: Make Corporations Pay Their Fair Share

The Problem

Major U.S. companies are exploiting tax loopholes that have allowed them to avoid paying trillions of dollars in taxes. While U.S. companies are required to pay taxes on foreign profits, a policy known as deferral allows them to avoid paying those taxes until the money is “repatriated”, or “brought back” to the country.

It's estimated that the lost revenue from offshore corporate tax schemes is in the neighborhood of **\$90 billion per year**. Even worse, much of that money is actually being held in U.S. banks, however deceptive accounting disguises the money as profits of a foreign subsidiary — which are sometimes nothing more than a name on a post office box. Indefinite tax deferral by corporations is costing the U.S. billions in tax dollars.

Multiple legislative proposals in the 113th Congress (such as the Partnership to Build America Act, H.R. 2084), have included an idea which sounds great upfront, but is actually dangerous — a repatriation holiday. These proposals attempt to lure corporations into bringing their profits “back” to the U.S. by allowing them to pay little to nothing in taxes in exchange.

A repatriation holiday is a huge loss to everyday Americans and huge incentive for corporations to continue using accounting tricks to avoid paying taxes.

Congress tried a repatriation holiday in 2004, and instead of creating jobs, companies” instead repurchased their own stock, increased executive pay, and even laid off workers during the same period. The bipartisan Joint Tax Committee estimated that a new repatriation holiday would cost the U.S. approximately \$96 billion over 10 years.

The Solution

To break the endless cycle of corporate tax avoidance, Congress must refuse the non-solution of repatriation holidays and instead end tax deferral once and for all. Corporations should be required to pay taxes on foreign profits at the time that they are made. These taxes must be compulsory.

What You Can Do

On behalf of myself and Public Citizen, a consumer interest organization with more than 300,000 members nationwide, I ask that you oppose any form of corporate tax repatriation holiday. The endless cycle of tax avoidance and the false promise of repatriation holidays incentivizes tax avoidance. Corporations should pay their fair share.

