

## 7. SAMPLE OPINION EDITORIAL

Here is a sample op-ed for a local paper to raise awareness about the need for a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United in Texas*. Make sure you send your proposed opinion editorial to correct address (usually listed on the student paper website), and call to make sure it was received and looked at.

Do not submit the same text to multiple publications at the same time. Shorter is better. More information on how to write and submit opinion editorials here: <http://bit.ly/Nyr1SP>

This May, as congressional primaries in Texas are fast approaching and local elections are heating up, people across the state are seeing the devastating impact of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to allow unlimited spending in our elections.

The Court's disastrous 2010 ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* gave corporations the green light to oppose or support candidates through so-called independent expenditures. To make matters worse, the ruling led to the creation of so-called Super PACs, which have become a powerful vehicle for corporations and the super-wealthy to buy influence.

Corporations can even make their political investments without full disclosure; hiding their political spending by giving to supposedly charitable organizations which are not required to disclose their contributions, but can advocate for or against candidates.

The *Citizens United* ruling is already affecting elections on the local and state level, where smaller campaign costs means that a few corporate or elite donors can have a devastating impact. Multiple outside groups are backing Lt. Governor David Dewhurst in the Republican Senate primary, while the out-of-state corporatist Club for Growth Super PAC is advocating for Ted Cruz.

By the end of April, outside groups had already spent more than \$1.3 million on the U.S. Senate race.

The effects of corporate spending in elections already have made national headlines in this year's GOP presidential primary, where Super PACs dominated campaign contributions, drowning out the voices of actual voters.

Just three Texas billionaires – Bob Perry, Harold Simmons and Robert Rowling – gave more than \$4.4 million combined to a super PAC supporting Mitt Romney. They've also given \$16.5 million to Karl Rove's American Crossroads group for the general election. Campaign costs are expected to hit record levels in the upcoming presidential race, with spending projected to total up to \$10 billion.

The good news is that Texans are fighting back. From Dallas to San Antonio, Corpus Christi to Houston, people are organizing and standing up for a government run for the people, by the people – not corporations and other special interests. People in cities and towns everywhere are organizing to pass local resolutions calling on Texas to support – and the U.S. Congress to pass – a constitutional amendment overturning *Citizens United*.

Momentum is growing across America. California, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, Rhode Island and Vermont\* have called for a constitutional amendment, and they've been joined by nearly 500\* cities and towns nationwide. And efforts are underway in many more states and cities.

University of Texas student council should join them to stand up for the rights and voices of We



the People by passing a resolution calling for an amendment to get big money out of our elections. We're going to beat the mega-corporations and plutocrats that gained from this ruling by continuing to build a mass movement to demand that elected officials at every level stand up for people, not corporate interests.

To get involved with the organizing going on in Austin, please contact Student at [student@university.edu](mailto:student@university.edu).

*\*Visit [www.DemocracyIsForPeople.org](http://www.DemocracyIsForPeople.org) for updated numbers on how many cities and states have called for an amendment or call 202-588-1000.*

## 8. SAMPLE RESOLVE LANGUAGE FOR A STANDARD RESOLUTION

*(This is sample 'resolve' language to use as a starting point for a resolution that would be voted on by your student/local government)*

RESOLVED, [That the Citizens/City Council/Students at \_\_\_\_\_] call upon the United States Congress to pass and send to the states for ratification a constitutional amendment to reverse *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*; and to clarify that:

Corporations are not entitled to the Constitutional protections or "rights" of natural persons;

### **And/Or**

"Money is not speech, and therefore regulating election-related spending is not equivalent to limiting political speech."

### **And**

RESOLVED, that we instruct the [City/State representatives of \_\_\_\_\_] to make the need and support for a constitutional amendment known to our state legislators, our state's Congressional delegation, and to the Congress at large and to ask for their position on such an amendment.

**"Mix and Match" Whereas Clauses are available at:**

<http://www.citizen.org/documents/Sample-Resolution-Language1.pdf>

