A Call for a Constitutional Amendment to Overturn
_Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission_

On January 21, 2010, the U.S. Supreme Court unleashed a flood of corporate money into our political system by ruling that, contrary to longstanding precedent, corporations have a First Amendment right to spend unlimited amounts of money to promote or defeat candidates. The decision in this historic case – _Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission_ – overturned a century of campaign finance law and stands to deal a devastating blow to our democracy unless we act.

**Americans Are Outraged by the Court’s Decision**
- Nearly nine in ten Americans (88%) say that big companies have too much power in Washington D.C.¹
- Eight in 10 respondents oppose the court’s decision in _Citizens United_.²
- Republicans, Democrats and Independents who have heard about _Citizens United_ believe by an almost 4-to-1 margin that the ruling is having a negative effect.³
- 83% of Americans (85% of Democrats, 81% of Republicans and 78% of Independents) think there should be limits on how much money corporations can give in elections. And 90% of those with incomes over $100,000 support such limits.⁴
- 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.” Only 14% disagree with this proposition. 75% of Republicans and 78% of Democrats agree.⁵
- 66% of small business owners view the _Citizens United_ ruling as bad for the ability of small businesses to compete. Only 9% say it is good for small business.⁶

**Since the Court’s Decision, Election Expenditures Have Soared**
- Spending by outside groups rose 243% in 2012 over the previous presidential election cycle.⁷
- Super PACs, which became funnels for outside spending after an appeals court applied _Citizens United_, collectively spent more than $609 million during the 2012 election cycle. Overall outside spending topped $1.29 billion.⁸
- In the 2012 election, the largest super PAC spent an astounding $142 million.⁹
- The 2012 election was the most expensive in history, costing more than $7 billion.⁰
Why a Constitutional Amendment

- A constitutional amendment is the long-term solution to fully reverse the court’s ruling, restore our rights and assert that democracy is for people, not corporations.
- A corporation is not a person. It does not vote and should not have such tremendous influence over elections; nor should the ultra-wealthy.
- Our elected officials cannot support the well-being of society when they fear that millions of dollars of corporate money will go to defeating them in the next election if they defy corporate interests.
- A constitutional amendment ultimately is the only way to finally overcome the profound challenges to our democracy posed by the *Citizens United* decision.

Support is growing quickly for an amendment

- So far, **more than 2 million people** have signed petitions in support of an amendment. At least **135 members of Congress** have declared their support.
- More than 120 national organizations – groups concerned about civil rights, the environment, climate change, open government and workers’ rights – have endorsed the call for a constitutional amendment ([www.United4ThePeople.org](http://www.United4ThePeople.org)).
- Sixteen states – California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia – and the District of Columbia have called for an amendment.
- Nearly 500 local municipalities have called for a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United* and rein in corporate influence.

---


