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U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

December 6, 2011

The Hon. Keith Ellison
1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-2305

Public Citizen Applauds Ellison's Constitutional Amendment Allowing Congress to Regulate Corporate Money in Elections

Dear Members of Congress:

Public Citizen stands firmly with Rep. Keith Ellison (D-Minn.) and his resolution to amend the Constitution allowing Congress and the states to regulate corporate money in elections. The resolution is a narrowly-tailored constitutional amendment that reverses the recent and disastrous *Citizens United* decision of the Supreme Court.

On January 21, 2010, five justices of the Supreme Court overturned decades-old legal precedent and a century of political tradition when they granted corporations the same free speech rights as people to spend unlimited corporate funds promoting or attacking candidates in state and federal elections. The *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* ruling was roundly condemned by the dissenting justices of the Court. "Our lawmakers have a compelling constitutional basis, if not also a democratic duty, to take measures designed to guard against the potentially deleterious effects of corporate spending in local and national races," wrote Justice Stevens in the blistering dissent.

The *Citizens United* decision has utterly dismayed Americans of all partisan persuasions. Poll after poll have shown overwhelming opposition to the ruling among Democrats, Independents and Republicans alike. The notion of "corporate personhood" is the subject both of public scorn and ridicule, and is fueling popular protests across the nation.

The constitutional amendment offered by Ellison is a reasoned response to this truly troubling decision. Public Citizen whole-heartily endorses this amendment as an important step in clarifying that First Amendment rights are for real people and not the artificial entities of for-profit corporations.

Sincerely,

Robert Weissman, President;
Craig Holman, Government Affairs Lobbyist;
Public Citizen