

## Amending the U.S. Constitution to Reserve Constitutional Rights for People, not Corporations

**WHEREAS** the US Constitution, as amended, describes the rights and freedoms granted to people, and makes no mention of corporations;

**WHEREAS** legal entities such as corporations are neither born nor naturalized in the US, and are therefore not entitled to the privileges or immunities of US citizens;

**WHEREAS** the First Amendment is designed to protect free speech rights of human beings, not corporations;

**WHEREAS** there is a profound difference between human beings with an inalienable right to self-expression and what a human being may possess, such as money or property;

**WHEREAS** multi-national corporations may be owned, in whole or in part, by foreign interests that should have no influence on elections in the US;

**WHEREAS** over the last 3 decades, a divided United States Supreme Court has repeatedly ruled that money equals speech, transforming the First Amendment into a powerful tool for corporations seeking to evade and invalidate democratically enacted reforms;

**WHEREAS** the corporate takeover of the right to free speech reached its extreme conclusion in the US Supreme Court ruling *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission*;

**WHEREAS** the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Citizens United v. F.E.C.* overturned longstanding precedents prohibiting corporations from spending their general treasury funds in our elections;

**WHEREAS** the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Citizens United v. F.E.C.* has unleashed a torrent of corporate money into our political process unmatched by any campaign expenditure totals in US history; and

**WHEREAS** this decision fundamentally threatens the integrity of our democratic process;

41 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats hereby call on  
42 the Washington State Legislature to pass a joint resolution urging the US Congress to  
43 pass and send to the states for ratification a constitutional amendment to establish that a  
44 corporation shall not be considered a person eligible for rights accorded to human  
45 beings under this Constitution, as amended, and the use of money to influence elections  
46 or the acts of public officials shall not be considered a protected form of speech; and  
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48 **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** the Washington State Democratic Central  
49 Committee forward this resolution to the Democratic National Committee and the other  
50 49 state Democratic Party organizations for their review and support.  
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53 Submitted by the 31<sup>st</sup> Legislative District Democrats to the Washington State  
54 Democratic Central Committee for consideration at its April 30, 2011 meeting in  
55 Wenatchee. (Date Submitted 1/20/2011)  
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57 Submitted by the King County Democrats to the Washington State Democratic Central  
58 Committee for consideration at its April 30, 2011 meeting in Wenatchee. (Date  
59 Submitted 4/21/2011)  
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61 The WSDCC Resolutions Committee "AMENDED THIS RESOLUTION AND  
62 RECOMMENDED A PASS" at its April 30, 2011 meeting in Wenatchee.  
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64 The WSDCC "PASSED" this resolution at its April 30, 2011 meeting in Wenatchee.