

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

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4 **WHEREAS** the US Constitution, as amended, describes the rights and freedoms
5 granted to people, and makes no mention of corporations;
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7 **WHEREAS** legal entities such as corporations are neither born nor naturalized in the
8 US, and are therefore not entitled to the privileges or immunities of US citizens;
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10 **WHEREAS** the First Amendment is designed to protect free speech rights of human
11 beings, not corporations;
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13 **WHEREAS** there is a profound difference between human beings with an inalienable
14 right to self-expression and what a human being may possess, such as money or
15 property;
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17 **WHEREAS** multi-national corporations may be owned, in whole or in part, by foreign
18 interests that should have no influence on elections in the US;
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20 **WHEREAS** over the last 3 decades, a divided United States Supreme Court has
21 repeatedly ruled that money equals speech, transforming the First Amendment into a
22 powerful tool for corporations seeking to evade and invalidate democratically enacted
23 reforms;
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25 **WHEREAS** the corporate takeover of the right to free speech reached its extreme
26 conclusion in the US Supreme Court ruling Citizens United v. Federal Elections
27 Commission;
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29 **WHEREAS** the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in Citizens United v. F.E.C. overturned
30 longstanding precedents prohibiting corporations from spending their general treasury
31 funds in our elections;
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33 **WHEREAS** the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in Citizens United v. F.E.C. has unleashed a
34 torrent of corporate money into our political process unmatched by any campaign
35 expenditure totals in US history; and
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37 **WHEREAS** this decision fundamentally threatens the integrity of our democratic
38 process;
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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 Pacific County Democrats to the Washington State Democratic
54 Central Committee for consideration at its January 28, 2012 meeting in Shelton. (Date
55 Submitted 1/20/2012)

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57 The WSDCC Resolutions Committee "AMENDED THIS RESOLUTION AND
58 RECOMMENDED A PASS" at its January 28, 2012 meeting in Shelton.

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60 The WSDCC "PASSED" this resolution at its January 28, 2012 meeting in Shelton.