

Resolution Urging Support for Initiative 735

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3 **WHEREAS** the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission*
4 (2010) and other decisions, has enunciated the novel and unprecedented principles that
5 corporations are entitled to political rights and privileges tantamount to those of
6 individual human beings, and that corporations' use of money is a form of protected
7 free speech;

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9 **WHEREAS** those decisions, and *Citizens United* in particular, invalidated campaign
10 spending reform laws enacted by bipartisan majorities in Congress and thereby
11 unleashed an ever-increasing torrent of special interest money into our political process;

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13 **WHEREAS** poll after poll has established that the American public supports
14 overturning those serially misguided rulings, the continuation of which poses an
15 increasing threat to a democratic republic of, by, and for the people;

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17 **WHEREAS** the current Washington State Democratic Party Platform, adopted in June
18 2014 at the Party's biennial Convention, unequivocally asserts:

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20 *We believe that corporations, as artificial entities, are not entitled to the Constitutional rights of*
21 *people...*

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23 and specifically calls for:

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25 *A constitutional amendment to establish that corporations shall not be considered as "persons"*
26 *for purposes of political activity, to reverse the pernicious ruling that money equals speech and to*
27 *institute stringent corporate campaign-contribution requirements...*

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29 **WHEREAS** the former Chair of our state's Republican Party is a board member of the
30 Citizens United organization, and his Party has consistently thwarted all efforts in our
31 State Senate to act on a resolution urging Congress to initiate a constitutional
32 amendment redefining "persons" and "speech," and providing for campaign finance
33 reforms, as specified in our State Democratic Platform; and

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35 **WHEREAS** the Washington Coalition to Amend the Constitution (WAmend) has filed,
36 with the Washington Secretary of State, an initiative to the legislature calling for
37 amendment of the U.S. Constitution to

38 (1) establish that the rights recognized in the Constitution are those of natural
39 persons only, not of corporations, and that the spending of money is not a form
40 of protected free speech;

41 (2) require prompt, accessible disclosure of all political contributions and
42 expenditures; and

43 (3) authorize federal, state and local governments to regulate such contributions and
44 expenditures; and

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46 **WHEREAS** that initiative, now designated as Initiative 735, would urge Washington's
47 current and future Congressional delegations to act immediately to propose a U.S.
48 Constitutional amendment to accomplish the three objectives set forth above;

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50 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic Central
51 Committee urges our members to support the WAmend effort to obtain the number of
52 voters' signatures necessary to qualify Initiative 735 as an initiative to the legislature.

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55 Submitted by the 32nd LD Democrats to the WSDCC. (Date Submitted 4/10/2015)

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57 The Resolutions Committee amended this resolution and recommended that it be
58 "PASSED" at its April 18, 2015 meeting in Pasco.

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60 The WSDCC "PASSED" this resolution at its April 18, 2015 meeting in Pasco.