

Reclaim Democracy for PEOPLE!

END Corporate "Personhood" and SuperPACs – Amend the Constitution

**CITIZEN ADVISORY PETITION
TO THE SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL
*NOT a formal Citizen Initiative***

Text of this proposal is on the reverse side.

PLEASE RETURN signed petitions to:
 Citizens Organized to Reclaim Democracy (CORD)
 PO Box 70452, Seattle WA 98127-0452

For pick-up by a CORD member, call or write:
 CitizensOrgToReclaimDemocracy@gmail.com
 For more information: 425-298-7694

To the Seattle City Council:

We The People, residents of Seattle, Washington, hereby urge the Washington State Legislature and the United States Congress to amend the United States Constitution to clearly state that:

- (1) Corporations are not human beings, and only human beings are endowed with Constitutional rights.
- (2) Contributions and expenditures for political purposes are not Constitutionally-protected speech. Therefore regulating political contributions and spending is not equivalent to limiting political speech.
- (3) Congress and the States shall have the power to regulate contributions and expenditures for campaigns and ballot measures, and to require public disclosure of the sources of such contributions and expenditures.

Furthermore, we ask for the **enactment of an ordinance** by which the Seattle City Council shall call upon the Washington Legislature and the U.S. Congress to amend the Constitution with provisions as outlined above, AND shall **place a measure on the ballot in the November 2012 general election**, as worded above and printed on the reverse, allowing voters in Seattle, Washington, to express their approval or disapproval of this Advisory Statement as written.

 **You do NOT need to be a registered voter to sign this petition.** 

1 SIGNATURE	STREET ADDRESS	CITY	ZIPCODE
PRINT	EMAIL	PHONE	DATE
2 SIGNATURE	STREET ADDRESS	CITY	ZIPCODE
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Seattle Advisory Measure on a Constitutional Amendment to Limit Corporate Political Spending and to Regulate Campaign Financing

Text of Proposed Ballot Measure

An advisory measure pursuant to Seattle Ordinance____, concerning fair elections and expressing the viewpoint of citizens of Seattle, calling on the Congress of the United States to amend the United States Constitution with provisions as set forth in this advisory.

WHEREAS, government of, by, and for the people has long been a fundamental American value; and

WHEREAS, free and fair elections are essential to democracy and effective self governance; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Citizens United v. the Federal Election Commission*, based in part upon the court's interpretations of the U.S. Constitution, has allowed unlimited corporate spending to influence campaigns, elections, lawmaking and public policy decisions, and thereby to threaten authentic democracy and self-governance by the people; and

WHEREAS, in reaching its decision, a majority of the Supreme Court, relying on prior decisions, interpreted the First Amendment of the Constitution to afford corporations the same free speech protections as natural persons; and

WHEREAS, the Court's decision in *Citizens United* severely hampers the ability of federal, state and local governments to enact reasonable campaign finance reforms and regulations regarding corporate political activity; and

WHEREAS, corporations should not be afforded the entirety of protections or "rights" of natural persons, such that the expenditure of corporate money to influence the electoral process is a form of constitutionally protected speech; and

WHEREAS, great aggregation of money and wealth in the hands of a few, combined with unfettered ability and permission to spend unlimited amounts for media time and independent electioneering, threatens democracy itself by overwhelming the voice and viewpoints of the people with special-interest propaganda, often anonymous and with exaggerations or falsehoods, making it difficult for citizens to discern the truth in campaigns and elections; and

WHEREAS, full, complete and accurate campaign finance disclosure is essential, because voters deserve to know who is spending money seeking to influence campaigns and election results; and

WHEREAS, persons are commonly and rightfully recognized as human beings whose essential needs include clean air, clean water, safe and secure food; and

WHEREAS, corporations are not and have never been human beings and exist only by legal charter and the express permission of people and governments, and as legal creations, corporations are rightfully subservient to human beings and governments; and

WHEREAS, corporations can exist in perpetuity, can exist simultaneously in many nations at once, need only profit for survival, and have bottom-line needs and priorities which may be at odds or cross-purposes with the fundamental needs and priorities of natural persons and communities; and

WHEREAS, the people of the United States previously have used the constitutional amendment process to correct decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court that are deemed to be egregious and wrongly decided and which go to the heart of our democracy and self-government; and

WHEREAS, tens of thousands of people and municipalities across the nation are joining together to call for an Amendment to the United States Constitution to establish that political speech and spending by corporate entities to influence the political process must be regulated and made subservient to the people's interest in authentic democracy and self-governance; and

WHEREAS, several proposed amendments to the Constitution have been introduced in Congress that would allow governments to regulate the raising and spending of money by corporations to influence elections; and

WHEREAS, in matters of general public policy which may guide specific lawmaking and regulations at the local level, it is useful and productive to determine the views of the electors of the City of Seattle regarding those policy matters; and policy advisory ballot measures are an efficient and effective means to determine the views of local voters on matters of general public policy;

Shall the voters of Seattle approve the following advisory to the Seattle Mayor and City Council:

An Advisory Statement by the Voters of Seattle on a Constitutional Amendment to Limit Corporate Political Spending and to Regulate Campaign Financing

We The People, citizens of Seattle, Washington, hereby urge the Washington State Legislature and the United States Congress to amend the United States Constitution to clearly state that:

- (1) Corporations are not human beings, and only human beings are endowed with Constitutional rights.
- (2) Contributions and expenditures for political purposes are not Constitutionally-protected speech. Therefore regulating political contributions and spending is not equivalent to limiting political speech.
- (3) Congress and the States shall have the power to regulate contributions and expenditures for campaigns and ballot measures, and to require public disclosure of the sources of such contributions and expenditures.

If this Advisory Measure is approved by majority vote on November 6, 2012, we the voters of Seattle, Washington hereby request that a certified copy of this Advisory Measure on a Constitutional Amendment to Limit Corporate Political Spending and to Regulate Campaign Financing be forwarded immediately to President Barack Obama, and to Senator Patty Murray and Senator Maria Cantwell, and to all members of Congress representing Congressional districts in Washington State, and to Governor Gregoire, and to all members of the Washington State Senate and House.

Furthermore, if this Advisory Measure is approved by majority vote on November 6, 2012, we the voters of Seattle hereby request that the Mayor and City Council of Seattle support education of the public about this Constitutional fair elections issue and support advocacy efforts to achieve a Constitutional amendment containing provisions as outlined herein.