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PRESS RELEASE

CA SUPREME COURT HEARS ARGUMENTS TO DECIDE PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO INSTRUCT THEIR REPRESENTATIVES

*CA Community Groups Collect Over 112,000 Signatures
Imploring the Court to Restore Prop 49 to the Ballot in 2016*

San Francisco, CA— Today, the California Supreme Court heard oral arguments on whether Californians should have the right to vote on Proposition 49—a voter instruction measure calling for a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United*. The case, brought by the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association against the State, seeks to shut down the only direct pathway Californians have to instruct their representatives and decide their future.

During this morning's hearing, Fredric D. Woocher, the attorney representing the State Legislature, presented compelling arguments to the seven Supreme Court Justices, highlighting the long-established and important role that voter instruction ballot measures play in California's democracy.

"The people have the right to instruct their representatives," Woocher declared emphatically to a packed room. "That has been in the Constitution since 1849. This is an act in response to citizens themselves who have asked to be heard on this issue."

Reacting to arguments from opposing counsel contending that the Legislature is legally limited in its ability to solicit input on critical issues from the people they represent, Justice Carol A. Corrigan remarked, "It is very challenging to say 'we give plenary power to the legislature, but heaven forbid we ask the people what they think.'"

A coalition of public interest non-profits, civic organizations, and community groups has been fighting to put Prop 49 on the ballot for the past two years. This morning, the coalition—including

the [California Clean Money Campaign](#), [California Common Cause](#), [California Public Interest Research Group](#), [Courage Campaign](#), [Democracy for America](#), [Free Speech for People](#), [Money Out! People In!](#), and [Money Out Voters In](#)-- delivered a petition with over 112,000 signatures urging the Court to restore Prop 49 and place the proposal before voters in 2016.

At a rally held outside the Supreme Court building just prior to the hearing, CA State Senator Bob Wieckowski--a longtime critic of Citizens United and the undue influence of wealthy interests in politics that it allows--stood with the people of California, expressing his unwavering support for Prop 49, calling it a "critical voter instruction tool."

California civic leaders spoke alongside Senator Wieckowski during the rally to underscore the importance of preserving Californians' fundamental right to participate in our democracy:

"How could the court silence our voices on the most profoundly impactful issue in American democracy today: the toxic effect of unlimited spending on our political process?" asked Eddie Kurtz, Executive Director of the Courage Campaign. "We are committed to doing all we can to educate the justices and help reverse this misguided decision."

"Billionaires should not have thousands of times more free speech than the average American just because they have so much more money to spend on elections," said Trent Lange, President of the California Clean Money Campaign. "That's why tens of thousands of Californians demanded that the legislature give them the opportunity to instruct their representatives to overturn Citizens United, and why tens of thousands more are asking the court to give us that right by restoring Prop 49 to the ballot."

"By putting Prop 49 back on the ballot, the California Supreme Court would give Californians a chance to instruct their representatives to act against this grave threat to our democracy, " said Emily Rusch, Executive Director, California Public Interest Research Group (CALPIRG).

"Prop 49 would be on the ballot two years later than it qualified, but not too late for California to insist that our nation has the conversation it must have about our pay to play political system and what it will take to fix it," said Michele Sutter, Chair of the Yes on 49 Committee.

"Today we rallied to demand the courts enforce our right to call upon Congress to take action to save our democracy by overturning Citizens United," exclaimed Helen Grieco, the Northern California Organizer of California Common Cause. "We demonstrated that we have a common cause to ensure that our government remains of, by and for the people."

The court is expected to issue a decision within 90 days.

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