

Challenging the New Corporate Campaign to Misuse the Constitution in a Letter to the Editor or Op-Ed

Publishing an op-ed or Letter to the Editor in your local paper continues to be an important way to convey a message to elected officials and your fellow community members.

Here are some tips for writing an effective piece:

- **Be brief.** As a general rule, you will want to keep your Letter to the Editor under 200 words; however, each newspaper has its own guidelines and instructions. Op-eds are typically limited to 500-700 words. You can generally find this information online or by calling the newspaper's office.
- **Connect your community to the big picture.** The more you can tie in local issues, politics, or personalities, the more compelling and effective your letter will be.
- **Be polite.** Remember to keep your LTE polite and respectful—newspapers won't publish letters that are insulting or inflammatory.

Key Points

- Over the past few decades business has launched a targeted, well-financed assault on laws protecting the public interest aimed at stretching constitutional protections to provide regulatory escape hatches for ordinary commercial corporations.
- Often, the targets of this assault are commonsense environmental measures supported by broad popular majorities, and the corporations claiming constitutional protections from these laws are giant multinationals. [Insert an example of a proposal in your community].
- Corporations are trying to use concepts that were intended to protect vulnerable, marginalized individuals and groups in the service of legal entities that wield incredible power and wealth. [Insert example of corporation using this argument and information about its annual revenues, ownership or examples of its lobbying power].
- Corporations are not people, and we as citizens need to make it clear that we will fight back against attempts to prevent our elected officials from protecting our health and our environment.

Contaminating the Courts: How Corporations Are Misusing the Constitution to Attack the Environment

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