

Free Speech For People 2020 End of Year Report

In 2020, our democracy was tested like never before. This crisis laid bare the critical and urgent need we now face to repair, rebuild, and improve our democratic processes.

Free Speech For People is ready to lead the fight. With our bold, singular, and innovative actions in the courts and in legislatures across the country, we will work every day to ensure all people have an equal voice and an equal vote in our democracy.

DEFENDING OUR DEMOCRACY

Free Speech For People is marking this year ten years of fighting for our democracy. Since our founding on the day of the Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*, we have won critical victories to get big money out of politics, challenge corruption at the highest levels of government, fight for free and fair elections, and advance new laws grounded in the promises of political equality for all. We are proud to share with you this summary of a few of our key victories from 2020.



DEFENDING OUR ELECTIONS



Enabled 35,000 New Voters to Register to Vote in Arizona for the November Election

We filed a federal lawsuit to extend the voter registration deadline in Arizona, due to decreased voter registration activity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We won our lawsuit to extend the deadline, allowing time for an additional 35,000 new voters to register to vote in Arizona for the general election.



Protected Voters in Minnesota from Illegal Threats of Voter Intimidation

We filed a federal lawsuit against a private mercenary contractor which planned to hire and deploy armed ex-soldiers to polling sites in Minnesota. We won our lawsuit under the Voting Rights Act, prohibiting the company from moving forward with their illegal voter intimidation plans in the state.



Prompted Censure of Largest Electronic Voting Machine Vendor in Nation

We co-issued a letter to the US Election Assistance Commission detailing false claims made by Election Systems & Software regarding the federal certification of an electronic voting machine with an insecure wireless modem. The EAC agreed with our findings and censured ES&S.



Launched Actions Across the Country to Protect the Health and Safety of Voters

Following the onset of COVID-19, we launched new litigation across the country to protect the health and safety of voters casting a ballot in person, and we published a safe-voting guide, with infectious disease expert and FSFP Board member Joia Mukherjee and former Minnesota Secretary of State Mark Ritchie.

DEFENDING LOCAL DEMOCRACY

In January 2020, the Seattle City Council unanimously passed our bill to end spending by foreign-influenced corporations in Seattle elections, in a major victory for Seattle voters and for defending the integrity of local elections. This victory followed the unprecedented attempts by Amazon and other companies to influence the outcome of the fall 2019 Seattle City Council elections. We were proud to work with Seattle City Council President Lorena González in drafting this legislation and we share in this victory with our campaign partners, Fix Democracy First and the Seattle area chapter of the League of Women Voters.



CHALLENGING SUPER PACS



In June 2020, we filed a petition for review before the U.S. Supreme Court in our case to abolish super PACs. In March 2010, the decision in the case of *Speechnow.org v. FEC*, unleashed super PACs into our political process. Big money forces have used super PACs to influence elections; overwhelm the voices of everyday people; and defeat public interest laws. While the Supreme Court decided in November 2020 not to review this case, we continue to pursue other efforts to revisit the ruling in *Speechnow*, including advancing our model law in new jurisdictions across the country to end super PAC spending in local elections.

FIGHTING AGAINST CORRUPTION



We co-launched a campaign calling for the impeachment of Donald Trump for his repeated abuses of power and for his defiance of the Constitution and the rule of law. Following his impeachment in December 2019, **we continued to call on Congress to hold the President accountable to the law.**



We filed a Freedom of Information Act request regarding armed personnel at racial justice protests falsely claiming to be law enforcement. This action followed **the release of our statement in support of the movement to demand justice and equality for all.**



We launched a legal challenge to the unconstitutional presidential pardon of Sheriff Joe Arpaio after his conviction for racial profiling and civil rights violations. Following a series of legal actions, in March 2020, **a court determined that Arpaio's conviction could not be vacated.**

THANK YOU FOR BEING A CHAMPION FOR OUR DEMOCRACY

OUR DEMOCRACY MAY HAVE BEEN TESTED THIS YEAR, but Free Speech For People has risen to the occasion - and it is because of your support. We are honored to be in this fight with you at this critical moment in history. With your support, Free Speech For People will continue the fight to end big money in politics, to protect our elections, and to ensure all people have an equal voice and an equal vote in our democracy.

In addition to gifts received from individual donors throughout the year, Free Speech For People is proud to have received support from the following foundations in 2020:

American Gift Fund

Craig Newmark Philanthropies

The Endeavor Foundation

Gaia Fund

Lisa and Douglas Goldman Fund

Park Foundation

Ralph E. Ogden Foundation

Threshold Foundation

Tides Foundation

The WhyNot Initiative

FREE SPEECH FOR PEOPLE IS GRATEFUL FOR ALL WHO SUPPORTED OUR WORK IN 2020!

Thank you so much for your support and we look forward to celebrating more victories with you in the year ahead.