



For Immediate Release
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MA AG Martha Coakley: “Time to put the electoral process back in the hands of the people, not corporations.”

Becomes First Sitting State Attorney General To Support A Constitutional Amendment to Overturn the US Supreme Court’s Citizens United Ruling

Free Speech For People Calls Statement ‘Another Touchstone in the Growing Movement’

Washington, DC -- Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley has become the first sitting state attorney general in the United States to support a constitutional amendment to overturn the US Supreme Court’s *Citizens United v. FEC* ruling issued in January 2010. The ruling swept away a century of precedent barring corporate expenditures in US elections and has unleashed a torrent of unlimited corporate money in the political process.

On Wednesday, December 7, 2011, Attorney General Coakley issued a letter to the chairs of the Massachusetts state senate and state house judiciary committees declaring support for a pending resolution that calls on Congress to pass and send to the states for ratification a constitutional amendment restoring free speech and fair elections to the people.

“This Resolution would send a strong message to Congress that the voice of the American people should not be diluted or trampled on by corporations under the guise of the First Amendment, and that the people should have the ability to participate freely and equally in self-government,” said Coakley.

“Attorney General Coakley’s bold statement in support of people’s rights today is yet another touchstone in the growing movement to reclaim our democracy and to ensure that people, not corporations, govern in America,” said John Bonifaz, the co-founder and director of Free Speech For People, a national non-partisan campaign launched on the day of the *Citizens United* ruling to press for a 28th Amendment to the Constitution to restore democracy to the people.

“In effect, the *Citizens United* decision solidified a thirty-year movement by the Supreme Court to use the First Amendment to invalidate democratically-enacted regulations on corporate conduct,” continued Coakley in her statement. “The good news is that we can do something to right this wrong. Activists from all walks of life have come together to advocate for the reversal of *Citizens United* or, barring that, mitigate its effects. Because the case was decided on Constitutional grounds, there are only two ways to completely reverse it: (1) bring another case before the Supreme Court and hope that the Court decides to reverse itself; or (2) amend the Constitution.”

Free Speech For People and MassVOTE, a state-wide grassroots democracy organization, are leading a campaign in Massachusetts to press for the passage in the state legislature of the resolution now endorsed by Attorney General Coakley. Ten Massachusetts towns have already passed local town meeting resolutions supporting this call.

Other states considering similar resolutions include New Mexico, Vermont, and Washington State.

For more information, see www.freespeechforpeople.org.

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