



For Immediate Release

March 22, 2013

Contact:

Ryan O'Donnell - (413) 335-9824
rodonnell@freespeechforpeople.org

New Hampshire State House to Congress: Overturn Citizens United And Get Big Money Out of Politics

CONCORD, NH. – On Wednesday, by a bipartisan vote of 189-139, the New Hampshire House of Representatives passed a resolution calling on Congress to overturn the Supreme Court's ruling in *Citizens United* by amending the U.S. Constitution to make clear that corporations are not people with constitutional rights (HCR 2).

The vote puts New Hampshire on track to become the twelfth state to call for such a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United*.

While the majority of House Republicans voted against the wishes of their base, ten joined with the majority to pass this important bill. A 2010 Peter Hart poll revealed that 68% of Republicans, 82% of independents, and 87% of Democrats support an amendment; a 2012 AP poll showed that 81% of Republicans, 78% of independents, and 85% of Democrats want to limit corporate, union, and other outside spending.

John Bonifaz, executive director of Free Speech For People, said: "More and more states are asking Congress to send them a constitutional amendment to get big money out of politics and make clear that people govern over corporations, not the other way around. With this strong bi-partisan vote, New Hampshire has taken a bold step forward in the fight to reclaim our democracy."

State Representative Bob Perry said, "Corporations are not people. After Citizens United campaign spending increased 352 percent to \$7 billion. What's next - corporations running for elected office? We must fight back against Citizens United and the corrupting influence of money in elections. HCR 2 is the good first step!"

Robert Weissman, President of Public Citizen said, "The strong passage of HCR 2 is an important step in the march to restore American democracy. Particularly significant is the bipartisan support for the resolution. Strong majorities of all parties agree that the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision was wrongly decided, and even larger majorities are angry about corporate control of the political process. We hope New Hampshire will be one of the next states to call for a constitutional amendment that states that democracy and constitutional rights are for the people, not the corporations."

"This victory is a testament to the groundswell of Americans – in New Hampshire and across the country – who are raising their voices to say that our democracy needs to be of, by and for the people," said Marge Baker, Executive Vice President of People For the American Way. "Americans are demanding that their political system no longer be overwhelmed with corporate and special interest money. The passage of HCR 2 in the New Hampshire House is an exciting step forward in this movement."

HCR 2 requests that Congress "begin the process for a constitutional amendment establishing that human beings, not corporations, are entitled to constitutional rights." *Citizens United* swept away a century of precedent barring corporate money in elections.

Representatives Cushing, Weed, Pastor and Cooney sponsored the resolution.

The roll call vote can be accessed here:

<https://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/7003/images/HCR%202%20Final%20RollCall%203-20-13%20w%2010%20R%20yeas.pdf>

The language of HCR 2 can be accessed here:

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/legislation/2013/HCR0002.html>

The polls cited can be found here:

<https://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/7003/images/01-03-11%20Hart%20poll%20for%20FSFP%20-%2079%20percent%20support%20an%20amendment.pdf>

...and here:

<http://freespeechforpeople.org/node/448>

Background

The movement to overturn *Citizens United* and reclaim our democracy has been growing across the country at the state and local levels. This past November,

voters in both Montana and Colorado approved ballot measures by nearly three-to-one margins, and seven other states -- Hawaii, New Mexico, Vermont, Rhode Island, California, Massachusetts, and New Jersey -- acted through their legislatures, which passed resolutions calling for an amendment; in two more, Connecticut and Maryland, majorities of the legislatures signed letters to Congress calling for an amendment.

Congressman Jim McGovern introduced two such amendment bills this year. Both have been co-sponsored by Rep. Carol Shea-Porter (D-NH) along with many other co-sponsors. HJ Res 20 would restore Congress' and the states' authority to regulate campaign spending, and HJ Res 21 or the "People's Rights Amendment" would overturn *Citizens United* and clarify that constitutional rights apply to living persons, not corporations.

U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and U.S. Congressman Ted Deutch (D-FL) have introduced the Democracy Is For People constitutional amendment that would prevent corporations from spending to influence elections and would enable to government to regulate campaign spending from individuals.

Free Speech For People works to challenge the misuse of corporate power and restore republican democracy to the people. The group advances the movement to amend the U.S. Constitution to overturn *Citizens United v. FEC*, an earlier case called *Buckley v. Valeo*, and the fabricated doctrine of corporate constitutional rights. For more on Free Speech For People, visit: www.FreeSpeechForPeople.org.

Public Citizen is a national, nonprofit consumer advocacy organization that has worked to protect health, safety and democracy since 1971.

The Coalition for Open Democracy is a nonpartisan coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to ensuring integrity, transparency and efficiency in political and legislative processes in New Hampshire and the nation.