



**For Immediate Release**  
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**After Launching Multimillion Dollar Lobbying  
Effort “Organizing For America,”  
White House Moves to Affirm Support for  
Overturning *Citizens United***

**Advocates Urge President to Press  
Congress to Pass Amendment Bill and  
Send it to the States for Ratification**

**WASHINGTON, DC.** – On Friday, the White House released an official response to a petition initiated by Free Speech For People that had urged him to “use the State of the Union to call for a constitutional amendment to get big money out of politics,” even while launching a new multimillion dollar lobbying organization.

The official response was entitled, “You're right. Let's continue this conversation,” and mentioned “President Obama agrees with you.”

But the response went on to acknowledge the difficulties associated with amending the Constitution, saying, “Now, it's going to take more than a response to this petition or a paragraph in a future State of the Union to get this done. Our founders quite consciously made amending the U.S. Constitution a difficult piece of business.”

The full petition response can be found here:  
<https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/response/youre-right-lets-continue-conversation>

The White House response coincided with efforts to convert the President's campaign operation into a nonprofit organization called "Organizing For Action," that will help lobby for his agenda and promises to raise millions of dollars from a network of large donors.

John Bonifaz, co-founder and executive director of Free Speech For People said, "Everyone working to overturn *Citizens United* should be happy to hear the President affirm his support, but now it's time for him to step up and press Congress to act. All the big money wrapped up in Organizing For America is a reminder of why we need to act now to seriously address this problem with an amendment. More and more states are signaling that they would ratify an amendment to reclaim our democracy if Congress sent one to them. This is the time for presidential leadership to help make it happen."

## **Background**

Free Speech For People and Avaaz launched the petition on January 8th, and it took just two weeks to cross the threshold of 25,000 signatures. Other groups promoting the petition included People for the American Way, Demos, Common Cause, and MoveOn Civic Action.

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 (D-MA) recently introduced two such amendment bills. 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.

## **About Free Speech For People**

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](http://www.FreeSpeechForPeople.org).