

Democracy Amendment

COALITION OF MASSACHUSETTS

Dear Senator,

The Democracy Amendment Coalition of Massachusetts (DACMA) is a coalition of organizations working to amend the United States Constitution in order to address the damage done to our democracy by U.S. Supreme Court decisions in *Citizens United v. FEC*, *Buckley v. Valeo* and others. Together with hundreds of organizations and many thousands of individuals nationwide, we are working to stop the avalanche of special interest money burying our democracy. Just as important, we oppose the extension of constitutional rights to corporations, which, as you probably know, has resulted in the courts overturning hundreds of laws protecting our health, safety, environment, and democracy.

The DACMA coalition, and all of the organizations signing below, are writing to ask you to lead our nation to take an important step to restore and protect our democracy. We request that you file or sponsor amendment(s) to the U.S. Constitution in the Senate affirming that 1) rights protected under the constitution are the rights of natural persons and not of incorporated entities and that 2) money spent to influence elections may be regulated by Congress and the states, and is not protected free speech under the First Amendment. A constitutional amendment is the only way to address the impediments to self-government posed by money in politics and corporate constitutional rights.

Clearly, voters are outraged by the current state of affairs. Nationally, sixteen states to date have called for a constitutional amendment – two by ballot question, fourteen by legislative action (including Massachusetts). Your constituents statewide overwhelmingly support a constitutional amendment. Already, over half of Massachusetts communities (182 to date) have called for an amendment, by passing either a local resolution (86 to date) or a ballot question (158 to date) or both. Support for a strong democracy amendment is clear. In November 2012, one million Massachusetts voters were asked by ballot question if they support a strong amendment with the provisions we are asking you to file or sponsor. The question passed easily with 79% support.

We urge you to file or sponsor amendment(s) in the Senate that address both the issue of money in politics and corporate constitutional rights and play a leadership role in advocating for this critical change. Government of the people, by the people, and for the people depends on it.

We would like to schedule a meeting at your Boston office to be held during the first two weeks of September to further discuss this issue with you. We will call your office to follow up in the next week to identify the best date and time for a meeting.

In the meantime, you can contact Tyler Creighton, Assistant Director of Common Cause Massachusetts, at (617) 426-9600 or tcreighton@commoncause.org.

We look forward to meeting with you in September. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

DACMA Coalition and the organizations signing below

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Pam Wilmot
Common Cause Massachusetts

Sara Brady
MassVOTE

Lee Ketelsen
*Move to Amend
Massachusetts Affiliates*

Steve A. Tolman
Massachusetts AFL-CIO

Janet Domentiz
*Massachusetts Public Interest
Research Group (MASSPIRG)*

John Bonifaz
Free Speech for People

Aquene Freechild
Public Citizen

Ryan Black
Sierra Club Massachusetts

Donna Kelly-Williams
*Massachusetts Nurses
Association*

Deborah Shah
Progressive Massachusetts

Erin O'Leary
*Neighbor to Neighbor
Massachusetts*

Carolyn Villers
*Massachusetts Senior Action
Council*

Cole Harrison
Massachusetts Peace Action

Russell Freedman
*Massachusetts Progressive
Democrats of America*

Alejandra St. Guillen
Oiste

Craig Altemose
Better Future Project

Rahsaan Hall
*Lawyers Committee for Civil
Rights Boston*

Brian Miller
United for a Fair Economy

David LeBoeuf
*The Initiative for Engaged
Citizenship*

Sheila Decter
*Jewish Alliance for Law and
Social Action*

Jane Winn
*Berkshire Environmental Action
Team*

Michaelann Bewsee
Arise for Social Justice

Christopher M. Jones
*Dudley St. Neighborhood
Initiative*

Magalis Troncoso Lama
Dominican Development Center

Frank Ramirez
*East Boston Ecumenical
Community Council*

Michael Kane
*Massachusetts Alliance of HUD
Tenants*

Janine Carreiro-Young
Brockton Interfaith Community

*Smedley D. Butler Brigade
Veterans for Peace, Chapter 9*

*Women's International League
of Peace and Freedom Cape
Cod*