

**Alliance for a Just Society • American Association of University Women • American Family Voices
Center for Media and Democracy • Common Cause • Conference of Major Superiors of Men
Consumers Union • Communications Workers of America (CWA) • Corporate Accountability
International • Daily Kos • Demos • Food & Water Watch • Franciscan Action Network • Free Speech
for People • Greenpeace • Jobs with Justice • Leadership Conference of Women Religious • League of
Conservation Voters • Main Street Alliance • Money Out Voters In (MOVI) • National Education
Association (NEA) • NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby • OurTime.org • People for
the American Way • Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) • Progressive Change Campaign Committee (PCCC)
Progressive Democrats of America • Public Campaign • Public Citizen • Sierra Club • Sisters of Mercy
of the Americas – Institute Justice Team • United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries
USAction • U.S. PIRG • Voices for Progress**

September 17, 2014

Dear Speaker Boehner and Majority Leader McCarthy:

The U.S. Supreme Court's decisions in recent years in *Citizens United v. FEC*, *McCutcheon v. FEC*, and other cases have subjected our democracy to a tidal wave of corporate and special interest money in elections. This unlimited campaign spending seriously threatens our democracy and silences the voices of average Americans. As Justice Breyer wrote in his dissent to *McCutcheon*, "where enough money calls the tune, the general public will not be heard."

Because our government is becoming too dominated by big money interests to be responsive to the needs of everyday Americans, we are writing to urge you to allow a vote this year on H.J. Res. 119, the Democracy for All Amendment.

This proposed constitutional amendment, which has more than 100 cosponsors, would re-establish Congress and the states' ability to pass common-sense guidelines for election spending. It can help to ensure that our elected officials pay more attention to the people who elect them rather than their campaign donors. The amendment would overturn *Citizens United v. FEC*, *McCutcheon v. FEC*, and the 1976 *Buckley v. Valeo* ruling and restore First Amendment values of democratic self-government.

If the wealthiest Americans and corporations can drown out the voices of ordinary Americans, we cease to be a democracy. In fact, a 2014 Princeton study analyzing 1,800 different policy initiatives over a 20+ year period concluded that we have now become an oligarchy in which "economic elites and organized groups representing business interests" wield the most power.

We cannot fully address the many challenges our country faces—jobs and the economy, energy independence, housing security, and many others—until we solve the root issue of money dominating politics. Passing a constitutional amendment is a critical way to elevate the voices of everyday Americans so that everyone, not just the wealthy few, can be heard. To date, 16 states and 500+ localities representing more than 100 million Americans have called on Congress to pass an amendment to get big money out of politics.

Amending the Constitution should only be done in the rarest of circumstances. However, America has reached a tipping point in which big-moneyed interests exert control over all levers of government. Instead of being of, by, and for the corporations and ultra-wealthy, American democracy needs to turn to an era of, by, and for the people. A majority of senators have voted for a fair and open debate on a companion Democracy for All Amendment, and the House should have a debate as well. We strongly urge you to allow an open debate and a floor vote on H.J. Res. 119, the Democracy for All Amendment, so that ordinary Americans will again have a voice in our democracy.

Sincerely,

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CC: House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and Minority Whip Steny Hoyer