

California COMMON CAUSE

PEOPLE . ACTION . DEMOCRACY

SPRING 2013

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www.commoncause.org/ca

WINS FOR 2012 NOVEMBER ELECTION

2012 was an exciting year for reforms that CA Common Cause passed to raise voters' voices and inform voters' choices. We saw candidates running in the new fair districts drawn by the Citizens Redistricting Commission. One million new voters registered on the new state Online Voter Registration system that we helped implement.

Your support and votes helped us win these victories across the state:

Statewide:

Prop. 40: Referendum to uphold Citizens Redistricting Commission Senate Maps - **Passed!**

Prop. 32: Proposition to ban union



paycheck deduction - **Defeated!**

Local Measures:

Measure R (Berkeley): Measure to amend the charter to adopt redistricting changes - **Passed!**

Measure P (Richmond): Resolution to overturn *Citizens United* - **Passed!**

Prop. G (San Francisco): Resolution to overturn *Citizens United* - **Passed!**

We did fall short on one effort - Measure O (Long Beach), to synchronize the city election date with federal elections. The outcome was disappointing, but we respect the voters' decision.

We could not have done it without you. Because of your advocacy, donations and volunteer hours to these campaigns that ensured our overall success.

LOS ANGELES CITY TO VOTE ON CITIZENS UNITED RESOLUTION

Los Angeles voters will have an opportunity on May 21 to support a resolution to instruct our Congressional members to pass a Constitutional Amendment to overturn *Citizens United*. The Los Angeles City Council placed this CA Common Cause and CALPIRG supported measure on the ballot:

Shall the Voters adopt a resolution that there should be limits on political campaign spending and that corporations should not have the constitutional rights of human beings and instruct Los Angeles elected officials and area legislative representatives to promote that policy through amendments to the United States Constitution?

Voter turnout in Los Angeles local elections has slowly been declining over the years and a chance to weigh in on the high-profile issue of



Citizens United may encourage higher voter participation this year. This election also represents the largest electorate so far to have the chance to instruct Congress to pass a constitutional amendment.

This past November, Common Cause worked to pass similar measures in the states of Colorado and Montana, and municipalities like Chicago, San Francisco, Richmond—all passed with more than 70% of the vote! These measures were only placed on the ballot because of volunteer and activist support, and Los Angeles is no exception.

The local Money Out/Voters In Coalition helped to build massive grassroots support for this city council vote. The measure was introduced by Councilmember Richard Alarcon, who represents northeast San Fernando Valley.

For more information about how you can help the campaign to pass Prop. C, call (213) 623-1216.

SAN DIEGO SAYS NO to CITIZENS UNITED

The San Diego City Council has passed a resolution urging Congress to support an amendment of the US Constitution to overturn Citizens United. The resolution, introduced last December by Councilmember Marti Emerald, was adopted unanimously.

We congratulate Councilmember Marti Emerald for her leadership in bringing this resolution to the San Diego Council.

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MONEY OUT, PEOPLE IN RALLIES

Saturday, January 19th, marked the third anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United*, which opened the floodgates to outside political spending. Our organizers pulled together events to challenge unbridled, outsized corporate and union speech in Richmond, San Francisco Peninsula and Los Angeles.



CALIFORNIA VOTERS vs. CITIZEN UNITED

Every Californian voter may have the opportunity to weigh in on the Citizens United decision. How? If AB 644 is passed out of the Legislature, it will place a “voter instruction” question on the ballot. A “yes” vote would directly instruct our congressional delegation to support an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would clearly authorize limits on campaign contributions and spending for the purpose of establishing a level playing field in elections to allow all citizens, regardless of wealth, a chance to express their political views.

Such a constitutional amendment would not only reverse the *Citizens United v. FEC* ruling, but would

reverse the *Buckley v. Valeo* and *SpeechNow.org v FEC* rulings and allow Congress and the states to enact mandatory campaign spending limits and eliminate Super PACs by reinstating contribution limits to all political committees.

By placing AB 644 on the 2014 ballot, reformers in California will have the opportunity to raise these important issues in the nation's most populous state that will be closely watched by the national media.

Sign up today to be a Citizen Co-Author of the bill to speak out against Citizens United.

www.commoncause.org/ca/coauthor

MONEY OUT/VOTERS IN CONVENING: A 28TH AMENDMENT?

Legal issues, Remedies and Strategies to Get Money out of Politics

In Los Angeles on Nov. 17, 2012, California Common Cause helped organize a one-day convening on money in politics issues with the **Money Out/Voters In** coalition. The standing room only crowd of over 300 people was eager to find practical solutions to get money out of politics and reclaim our democracy. The conference featured key speakers such as Lawrence Lessig, Trevor Potter, Cenk Uyger, Jessica Levinson and our own Derek Cressman. For more details about the constitutional amendments and legislative actions discussed, go to: www.commoncause.org/cal/novconf



INITIATIVE REFORM

CA Common Cause is launching a new effort to reform our treasured initiative process. Created 100 years ago, the initiative was intended to give regular citizens the power to shape laws in the face of a legislature, judiciary and Governor's office controlled by railroad and other special interests. Today, initiative campaigns are dominated by deep-pocketed special interests. We are heading up discussions on how to change the process to increase citizen access, information, and participation. Stay tuned!

FUTURE OF CA ELECTIONS

CA Common Cause was proud to host the Future of California Elections (FOCE) conference, a culmination of an 18-month collaboration with county and state election officials, civil rights and good government groups. On Jan. 23rd, 200 people gathered in Sacramento to learn about FOCE's achievements in helping to implement Online Voter Registration, improve the voter guide and pass Same Day Registration. Attendees discussed how we could improve voter information and participation, implement the statewide voter registration database, and disaster-proof our elections.

For conference materials & resources, visit:
www.commoncause.org/cal/foce2013program

DIRECT ADVOCACY-ROUND UP

CA COMMON CAUSE SPONSORED BILLS

SB 2 (Lieu) & 3 (Yee) – Comprehensive campaign finance reform

Comprehensive legislation that strengthens campaign finance disclosure in slate mailers, TV and radio ads, increases penalties, gives FPPC more powers to investigate. Requires 2/3 vote.

CA COMMON CAUSE SUPPORTED BILLS

SUPPORT ACA 4 (Olsen) / SCA 10 (Wolk) - Legislative procedure

This bill would create a 3-day notice and in-print rule for all bills (including the budget), before the Legislature can vote. It creates additional in-print and notice requirements for bills as they travel through the legislative process. Requires 2/3 vote.

SUPPORT SB 26 (Correa) - Political Reform Act of 1974: slate mailers

This bill would increase the font and prominence of disclosures on slate mailers. Requires 2/3 vote.

SUPPORT SB 27 (Correa) - Political Reform Act of 1974

This bill would increase non-profit political contribution disclosures, require reporting of political donors, and requires any candidate or ballot measure campaign that exceeds

\$1,000,000 to maintain top ten list of contributors, to be posted on FPPC website. Requires 2/3 vote.

SUPPORT SB 29 (Correa) - Postmark on Vote by Mail Ballots

This bill would authorize Vote by Mail ballots with an Election Day postmark (or earlier) to be counted, if they arrive by Election Day or within 3 days after. Requires majority vote.

SUPPORT SB 44 (Yee) - State Internet Web sites: online voter registration

This bill would require each Internet Web site maintained by the state to include a hyperlink on the site's homepage to the online voter registration page of the Internet Web site of the Secretary of State. Requires majority vote.

NOTE: February 22 was the last day for bills to be introduced. CA Common Cause is still reviewing dozens of bills, such as the new language of the California DISCLOSE Act. You can check out our website at: www.CommonCause.org/CA to see the latest bill analysis.

If you're interested in writing a letter in support of any of our sponsored or supported bills, please contact (916) 520-4070.



Senator Leland Yee, Democratic Party ED Shawnda Westly, Senator Alex Padilla, and Assemblyman Brian Jones participate in the FOCE Policy Forum moderated by John Myers from ABC News 10

Photos are from the FOCE Conference that took place in Sacramento. Workshop presenters and participants collaborated on ideas to improve California elections.

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UPCOMING EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

March 13-14, 2013

The Lessons of Watergate

Location: National Press Club, Washington, DC
RSVP: www.commoncause.org/watergate

April 27, 2013

SAVE THE DATE: LA: 6th Annual Media Reform Summit

Location: Occidental College, Los Angeles
For more info: akronheim@commoncause.org

August 16-18, 2013

4th Annual Student Activist Training

Location: University of California, San Diego
Apply today: www.commoncause.org/ca/2013Application

HOST AN ALEC SCREENING

Interested in hosting a house party with Common Cause & Bill Moyers? Learn about ALEC, a secretive but powerful organization of political corporations:

www.theunitedstatesofalec.org



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