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CONTACT

## **FIVE YEARS LATER, *CITIZENS UNITED* CONTINUES TO LEAVE A LEGACY OF POLITICAL CORRUPTION AND SPECIAL INTEREST INFLUENCE**

CHICAGO, IL— For five years, the American people have felt the consequences of the Supreme Court decision overturning a hundred-year-old protection against unchecked political spending by corporations and unions. Since the *Citizens United* ruling, we have seen an unprecedented level of special interest money influencing election outcomes and watched lobbyists and the very wealthy snatch vast amounts of political power from the hands of ordinary Americans.

Today, Americans have had enough. Across the country, Common Cause is helping cities and states pass measures aimed at putting elections back in the hands of voters. On February 24<sup>th</sup>, Chicagoans, too, will have an opportunity to stand up against the wholly undemocratic power of Super PACs and Dark Money by voting YES for Fair Elections Illinois.

"It has been five years since the Supreme Court attacked our democracy by crafting the ridiculous myth that corporations are people with the right to flood our elections with unlimited money, yet as people all over the country are demonstrating today, we're not even close to giving up. From pushing for public financing systems to continuing to lobby Congress to overturn *Citizens United*, Americans are taking to the streets to support the cause of freedom," Rey Lopez-Calderon, Executive Director Common Cause IL.

Common Cause's Fair Elections Illinois campaign will give Chicagoans the chance to add a critical voice to the growing chorus of 16 states and about 500 localities – home to more than 120 million Americans – that passed ballot measures and legislative resolutions calling on Congress to stop the torrent of unlimited special interest spending on elections.

The February 24th ballot measure in Chicago calls for campaign financing for candidates using small contributions from voters and a limited amount of public funds. By voting YES, Chicagoans will be sending a strong message to local candidates and the U.S. Congress that unchecked political spending is drowning out the free speech of individuals and groups of more modest means.

On a national scale, Cause is calling for an amendment by Congress that would restore campaign finance limits in place for decades before the court unveiled its new reading of the Constitution. With each city and state that stands up against corrupt political power, we are closer to creating change for every American.

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