

Common Cause Questionnaire Candidate: Martha Coakley Office: Governor 1. A

I am deeply concerned about the influence of money in politics. Elections should be about ideas and grassroots organizing, not dictated by large contributions from wealthy individuals and special interests but, as a result of the *Citizens United* decision, the influence and interests of the wealthy few will continue to further shout down the voices of everyone else. We cannot stand idly by and allow money to corrupt our political system.

I was the first Attorney General in the country to call for a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United*, and I was proud to join with 25 other Attorneys General to urge the Supreme Court to leave intact the states' ability to regulate and restrict corporate political spending. In the current race for Governor, I have repeatedly called for a people's pledge, similar to the one signed by Elizabeth Warren and Scott Brown, and I was a vocal supporter of the legislation, recently passed by the state legislature and signed by Governor Patrick, that strengthens disclosure requirements for Super PACs in Massachusetts.

I am committed to running a grassroots campaign, and I will do everything in my power to ensure that the power in our political system remains with everyday people, not with wealthy special interests.

Do you support public financing of elections? Please be specific about which offices it should cover and any other information about what kind of support should be provided.

I believe Massachusetts' current model, which covers all statewide constitutional officers, is an effective framework.

Do you support a constitutional amendment to allow the government to limit political spending and to clarify that corporations do not have the same rights as people? Why or why not.

I was the first Attorney General to call for a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United*, and I will continue to fight for meaningful campaign finance reform on both the state and federal level. Affording corporations the same rights as people, and allowing them to spend unlimited amounts to influence elections threatens to silence the voices of millions of Americans, and do irreparable harm to our democracy.

2) What would you do to bring more transparency to government operations?

I believe that greater transparency in state government can go a long way towards improving responsiveness and increasing the public's trust of government. As Attorney General, I have supported expanded training for local officials to ensure compliance with our state's open meeting law and give residents greater access to their local government. As Governor, I would work to ensure that we meet our obligations under the state's existing public records law, by removing barriers such as cost and outdated technology, which often make supposedly public records virtually inaccessible.

3) The legislature passed a terrific elections bill earlier this year that will make great steps towards modernizing our elections. Would you support Election Day registration for the commonwealth? Is there anything else you think we should do to improve our elections in Massachusetts?

In light of the Supreme Court's decision to strike down key provisions of the Voting Rights Act, and efforts in several states to restrict voting rights, expanding access to the ballot box is now more important than ever. I support same day registration, as well as expanded early voting and online voter registration, critical efforts that will empower more people to vote in Massachusetts.

4) What do you think should be done, if anything, about the issue of political patronage?

As Governor, I will review current hiring practices to ensure that we are hiring and promoting qualified applicants that reflect the diversity of our state, and I will improve transparency, to increase accountability and safeguard the public's trust. In addition, I will lead proactive outreach to develop a talented public sector workforce and ensure that we have competent, innovative employees at all levels of state government.