

**July 8, 2014**

**Dear Senator:**

The U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United*, now bolstered by the recent *McCutcheon* decision, has unleashed a flood of spending on our elections that threatens the very foundation of our democracy.

Because we know that America will never deliver on its promise if our election system is dominated by big money interests, we are writing today to urge you to support S.J.Res. 19: a constitutional amendment to establish that Congress and the states have the power to regulate and limit election spending.

This amendment would overturn *Citizens United v. FEC*, as well as *McCutcheon v. FEC*, the decision issued earlier this year eliminating the cap on the total amount an individual can contribute to candidates, political parties and political committees. The amendment also would overturn the 1976 *Buckley v. Valeo* ruling, which established the doctrine colloquially known as "money equals speech."

The Supreme Court held in *McCutcheon* that the only legitimate rationale for limiting campaign spending is to prevent quid pro quo corruption – essentially, the crime of bribery. But the American people understand quite well that corruption can take many forms and the problem with big money dominating our elections is far more profound than the narrowly defined crime of bribery. These activist judicial changes to the meaning of our Constitution tilt the entire government to favor big money donors. They deny regular people an equal say in determining the future of our country.

America faces great and serious challenges – putting people back to work, addressing deepening inequality, averting catastrophic climate change, fixing our schools, ensuring quality and affordable health care for all, and much more. Our country has the wealth and wherewithal, and the creativity and conscience, to meet these challenges. But we will fall short unless we repair our democracy.

We do not lightly call for amending our great Constitution. But we know that there can be no greater constitutional purpose than ensuring the functioning of our democracy. We urge you in the strongest terms to support S.J.Res.19, so that it quickly becomes the 28<sup>th</sup> amendment to our Constitution.

- ❖ Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU)
- ❖ Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)
- ❖ American Family Voices
- ❖ Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN)
- ❖ Ben & Jerry's Homemade, Inc
- ❖ Beyond Toxics
- ❖ California Council of Churches

- ❖ Campaign for Americas Future
- ❖ Caney Fork Headwaters Association
- ❖ Center for Effective Government
- ❖ Center for Food Safety (CFS)
- ❖ Center for Media and Democracy/Progressive Inc.
- ❖ Common Cause
- ❖ Communications Workers of America (CWA)
- ❖ Concerned Citizens Coalition of Long Branch
- ❖ Cornucopia Network/NJ/TN Chapter
- ❖ Corporate Accountability International
- ❖ Cumberland Countians for Ecojustice
- ❖ Daily Kos
- ❖ Democracy Matters
- ❖ Demos
- ❖ Empire State Consumer Project
- ❖ Environmental Health Strategy Center
- ❖ Food & Water Watch
- ❖ Food Empowerment Project
- ❖ Franciscan Action Network
- ❖ Free Speech For People
- ❖ Friends Committee on National Legislation
- ❖ Green America
- ❖ Greenpeace
- ❖ Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement
- ❖ Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
- ❖ International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)
- ❖ League of Conservation Voters (LCV)

- ❖ Money Out Voters In
- ❖ National Action Network
- ❖ National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- ❖ National Education Association (NEA)
- ❖ National Employment Law Project
- ❖ Network for Environmental & Economic Responsibility of United Church of Christ
- ❖ NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
- ❖ New Jersey Work Environment Council
- ❖ Oil Change International
- ❖ OurTime.org
- ❖ People For The American Way
- ❖ Pesticide Action Network
- ❖ Physicians for Social Responsibility
- ❖ Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
- ❖ Public Campaign
- ❖ Public Citizen
- ❖ Represent.Us
- ❖ Sciencecorps
- ❖ Sierra Club
- ❖ The Stamp Stampede
- ❖ The Story of Stuff Project
- ❖ The United Food & Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW)
- ❖ United for a Fair Economy (UFE)
- ❖ United Steelworkers
- ❖ USAction
- ❖ U.S. PIRG
- ❖ Voices for Progress