

BIG MONEY OUT

"DEMOCRACY LOSES WHEN BIG MONEY WINS"

January 22nd, 2021

To Senate Majority Leader Dick Saslaw, Speaker of the House of Delegates Eileen Filler-Corn, and Members of the Virginia General Assembly:

January 21st was the 11 anniversary of Citizens United. **We urge you to support a Virginia resolution calling for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution which affirms the right of Congress and the states to set reasonable limits on money spent in elections.**

The right of states to control election spending has been limited by a series of Supreme Court decisions which have struck down long standing precedent prohibiting corporations and wealthy special interests from spending unlimited amounts of money to influence the outcome of our elections. As a result, overall spending on the 2020 federal elections reached \$14 billion, roughly double the cost of the 2016 election and election spending through super PACs and “dark money” groups reached an all-time high of about \$3.2 billion, over 3 times the amount of prior election cycles, according to [Open Secrets](#).

Surveys show that [70-80% of Americans](#), irrespective of their party affiliations, agree that **the most damaging development in U.S. elections has been the surge in the corrosive impact of money on our elections and public policies**. Meanwhile, small and medium-sized business owners complain that big money and special interests suppress product innovation and market competition, creating more [monopolistic entities](#) than ever before. In fact, [85% of business leaders](#) believe that our campaign finance system is broken and action needs to be taken to repair it.

In a remarkable expression of outrage about an issue which Americans collectively view as threatening our democracy, 21 states and over 900 communities around the country have passed resolutions in support of this Constitutional Amendment. These resolutions conclude that an amendment to the U.S. Constitution is needed to enable Congress and the states to control election spending.

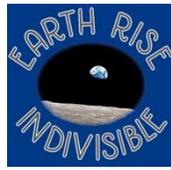
It is fitting that the 2021 Virginia General Assembly take action to become the 22nd state to approve such a supporting resolution on the 50th anniversary of the revised Virginia constitution. This action would affirm that our state has compelling interests in representative self-government, federalism, the integrity of the electoral process, and the political equality of all persons.

Rescuing our democracy from control by corporations and the super wealthy requires that states and the Congress regain their ability to regulate election spending. This requires an amendment to the U.S. Constitution which is supported by the majority of American citizens. We urge you

to help lead the way in adding Virginia's voice to that of a growing number of states, stating that that Government is for, and by, the people.

SIGNED:

VA Chapter of American Promise	Martinsville-Henry County Democrats
Public Citizen	American Federation of Teachers Virginia
Activate Virginia	Wolf-PAC Virginia
Sierra Club Virginia Chapter	Indivisible Virginia
Virginia Democracy Forward	Protect Our Commonwealth
Indivisible Winchester	RISE for Youth
Grassroots Alexandria	Appalachian Women of Action
350 Alexandria	Maddison Huddle.
Our Revolution Alexandria	Hunter Mill Huddle
New River Valley Indivisible	Indivisible Arlington
VA Dems-Madison Democrats	Together We Will - Hampton Rhodes
Loudoun Climate Coalition	Women on Your Left
Arlington Young Dems	Indivisible Below the Beltway
Our Revolution Falls Church	Democracy4Change
Progressive Democrats of America - Virginia	Making Voters Matter
We of Action (WofA)	Sierra Club Virginia Chapter
Virginia Grassroots Coalition, Climate & Clean	Clean Virginia
Energy Working Group,	Blue Virginia
Virginia Muslim Political Action Committee	Green New Deal VA Coalition
Virginia Political Cooperative	Clean Money Squad Virginia
Loudoun Progressives	Indivisible Charlottesville
Virginia Human Rights Coalition	Winchester Frederick Democratic
Our Revolution Northern Virginia	Committee
UnKoch My Campus	Virginia Justice Democrats.
RepresentUS Virginia	Network NoVA
SW Virginia Poor People's Campaign	



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