

Resolution Urging Support for Initiative 735

WHEREAS the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission* (2010) and other decisions, has enunciated the novel and unprecedented principles that corporations are entitled to political rights and privileges tantamount to those of individual human beings, and that corporations' use of money is a form of protected free speech; and

WHEREAS those decisions, and *Citizens United* in particular, invalidated campaign spending reform laws enacted by bipartisan majorities in Congress and thereby unleashed an ever-increasing torrent of special interest money into our political process; and

WHEREAS poll after poll has established that the American public supports overturning those serially misguided rulings, the continuation of which poses an increasing threat to a democratic republic of, by, and for the people; and

WHEREAS the current Washington State Democratic Party Platform, adopted in June 2014 at the Party's biennial Convention, unequivocally asserts:

We believe that corporations, as artificial entities, are not entitled to the Constitutional rights of people...

and specifically calls for:

A constitutional amendment to establish that corporations shall not be considered as "persons" for purposes of political activity, to reverse the pernicious ruling that money equals speech and to institute stringent corporate campaign-contribution requirements ...;

And **WHEREAS** the former Chair of our state's Republican Party is a board member of the Citizens United organization, and his Party has consistently thwarted all efforts in our State Senate to act on a resolution urging Congress to initiate a constitutional amendment redefining "persons" and "speech," and providing for campaign finance reforms, as specified in our State Democratic Platform; and

WHEREAS the Washington Coalition to Amend the Constitution (WAmend) has filed, with the Washington Secretary of State, an initiative to the Legislature calling for amendment of the U.S. Constitution to (1) establish that the rights recognized in the Constitution are those of natural persons only, not of corporations, and that the spending of money is not a form of protected free speech; (2) require prompt, accessible disclosure of all political contributions and expenditures; and (3) authorize federal, state and local governments to regulate such contributions and expenditures; and

WHEREAS that initiative, now designated as Initiative 735, would urge Washington's current and future Congressional delegations to act immediately to propose a U.S. Constitutional amendment to accomplish the three objectives set forth above;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we endorse the WAmend Initiative 735 and urge our members to support, in all ways possible, WAmend's efforts to obtain the number of voters' signatures necessary to qualify Initiative 735 as a ballot measure for adoption by our State Legislature or Washington voters.

*Adopted April 8, 2014, by the 32nd District Democrats;
Subsequently edited by the KCDCC Resolutions Committee and
submitted to the KCDCC Endorsements Committee
for further action pursuant to Endorsements Rule VI.3*