Money OUT, Voters IN

Wisconsin

October 8, 2013

Representative Tyler August
Committee on Government Operations and State Licensing
Room 119 West, State Capitol
PO Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Representative August,

We, along with 24,000 Wisconsinites, urge you to hold a hearing on Assembly Joint Resolution 50, which has been referred to the Committee on Government Operations and State Licensing. AJR 50 proposes to place a non-binding referendum question on the November, 2014 ballot asking the people of Wisconsin whether Congress should pass an amendment to the federal Constitution overturning the Supreme Court ruling in Citizens United v. FEC.

The Supreme Court, in issuing this ruling, did not consult the people of Wisconsin when they opened the floodgates to massive political spending in our elections and weakened disclosure of the source of these funds. Across the state and nation, people have been voicing their concerns about money in politics. As of today, 23 units of local government in the State of Wisconsin and 16 states across the nation have weighed in on Citizens United and its impact in our elections.

Political power in Wisconsin and in the country is increasingly concentrated in the hands of a wealthy (and shrinking) few which threatens our democracy and the promise of a government which should be of, by, and for the people. Republicans, Democrats, and Independents have come together across Wisconsin to say this is not the democracy we want.

In the past six months, over 24,000 Wisconsinites have called on you, our state leaders, to let the people of Wisconsin have our say too, through a statewide advisory referendum. Together, we are asking you to do nothing but let us have a say in the current state of our democracy, and to let the people decide whether this is the democracy we want in Wisconsin.

Outside the Capitol, citizens of every political stripe believe money is playing far too great a role in elections, is having a poisonous effect on governing, and needs to be reined in. Broad bi-partisan majorities support democracy reform. A 2012 Associated press poll found that 81% of Republicans, 78% of Independents, and 85% of Democrats believe “there should be limits on the amount of money corporations, unions, and other organizations can contribute to outside organizations trying to influence campaigns for Presidents, Senate, and US House.”

The people of Wisconsin have a right to be heard on what is arguably one of the most important issues of our time. The proposed resolution, AJR 50, and the resulting referendum will let voters across the state express their views on this important question.
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Together, we urge you to hold a public hearing on AJR 50 and to move this bill forward, giving your constituents and residents throughout the state a chance to make their voices heard.

Sincerely,
Money Out, Voters In Coalition members:
WISPIRG
People For the American Way
Wisconsin Democracy Campaign
Center for Media and Democracy
South Central Wisconsin Move To Amend
United Wisconsin
Wisconsin Alliance for Retired Americans
AFT- Wisconsin
Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups
Citizen Action Wisconsin
Madison Area Urban Ministry
National Association of Social Workers
WI Chapter
United Council of UW Students
Madison Teachers, Inc.
Wisconsin Network For Peace And Justice
League of Women Voters – Wisconsin
Midwest Environmental Advocates
Peace Action WI
Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter
WI Farmers Union
Door County Environmental Council
South West Wisconsin Area Progressives
Reedsburg Area Concerned Citizens
One Wisconsin Now
9 to 5
Progressive Dane
Move to Amend of Southeast Wisconsin
Chippewa Valley Move to Amend
Move to Amend Rock River Affiliate
Lake Mills Move to Amend
Madison MoveOn
Wisconsin Grassroots Network
South Central Federation of Labor
Teaching Assistants’ Association UW-Madison
Wisconsin Wave