Legislation Details (With Text)

File #:	RES 12-554	**Version:** 2	**Name:**	
Type:	Resolution		**Status:**	Passed
			In control:	City Council
			Final action:	6/13/2012
Title:	Supporting an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to provide that corporations are not persons.			
Sponsors:	Dan Bostrom, Amy Brendmoen, Melvin Carter III, Kathy Lantry, Russ Stark, Dave Thune, Chris Tolbert			
Indexes:				
Code sections:				
Attachments:	1. Holben-Lundeen email in support of 12-554.pdf			

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
6/18/2012	2	Mayor's Office	Signed	
6/13/2012	2	City Council	Adopted	Pass

Supporting an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to provide that corporations are not persons.

WHEREAS, government of, by, and for the People has long been a cherished American value, and a fundamental and inalienable right of the People to self-govern and thereby secure rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and

WHEREAS, free and fair elections are essential to democracy and effective self-governance; and

WHEREAS, *Citizen's United v. Federal Election Commission*, 130 S.Ct. 876 (2010), rolled back legal limits on corporate spending in the electoral process and allowed unlimited corporate spending to influence elections, candidate selection, and policy decisions, thereby threatening fair elections by and for the People; and

Whereas, The Court's decision in *Citizens United* hampers the ability of federal, state, and local governments to enact reasonable campaign finance reforms and regulations regarding corporate political activity; and

Whereas, in his dissent, Justice John Paul Stevens recognized that "[u]nlike natural persons, corporations have 'limited liability' for their owners and managers, 'perpetual life,' separation of ownership and control, 'and favorable treatment of the accumulation and distribution of assets' . . . corporations have no consciences, no beliefs, no feelings, no thoughts, no desires. Corporations help structure and facilitate the activities of human beings, to be sure, and their 'personhood' often serves as a useful legal fiction. But they are not themselves members of 'We the People' by whom and for whom our Constitution was established," 130 S.Ct. 876, 972, and

WHEREAS, corporations are not and have never been human beings; and

Whereas, corporations should not be personified and granted constitutional rights guaranteed to individual human beings such that the expenditure of corporate money to influence the electoral process is a form of constitutionally protected speech above reasonable regulation; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the St. Paul City Council supports amending the United States Constitution to provide that corporations are not entitled to the entirety of protections or "rights" of human beings, specifically so that the expenditure of corporate money to influence the electoral process is no longer a form of constitutionally protected speech, and calls on Congress to begin the process of amending the Constitution.

Dear Council President Lantry,

We are writing in support of File #: RES 12-554, the anti-corporate personhood resolution. The inalienable rights granted to human beings by the constitution are for human beings, and not corporations. In a time when people's trust in the government is waning, passing this resolution is a step forward in legitimizing government. The federal government should be held to the same standard for democracy as the City of St. Paul. As a City, we can join Duluth, New York and others to show that we oppose the unrestricted ability of corporations to spend money to influence elections, candidate selection and policy decisions. By passing this bill in St. Paul, we will build momentum for similar bills in the MN State Legislature, which is a critical step toward our ultimate goal, a Constitutional Amendment. Please let us know how you plan to vote on this.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

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