

RESOLUTION NO. 12-011

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PORT TOWNSEND, WASHINGTON, SUPPORTING THE “MOVE TO AMEND” CAMPAIGN TO CALL FOR AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION TO ABOLISH CORPORATE PERSONHOOD

Whereas, government of, by, and for the people has long been a cherished American value; and the people’s fundamental and inalienable right to self-govern, and thereby secure rights to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness is guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence; and

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

Whereas, corporations are not mentioned in the U.S. Constitution, and the people have never granted constitutional rights to corporations, nor have the people decreed that corporations have authority that exceeds the authority of the people of the United States; and; and

Whereas, we do not object to the concept of the ability of corporations to engage in legal actions (e.g. enter into contracts, sue, be sued, etc.); and

Whereas, interpretation of the U.S. Constitution by appointed Supreme Court justices to include corporations in the term “persons” has long denied the peoples’ exercise of self-governance by endowing corporations with constitutional protections intended for the people; and

Whereas, the illegitimate judicial bestowal of civil and political rights upon corporations usurps basic human and constitutional rights guaranteed to human persons, and also empowers corporations to sue municipal and state governments for adopting laws that violate ‘corporate rights’ even when those laws serve to protect and defend the rights of human persons and communities; and

Whereas, corporations are not and have never been human beings, and therefore they do not vote in elections and should not be categorized as persons for purposes related to elections for public office; and

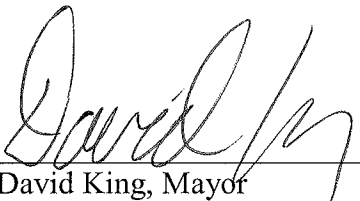
Whereas, the recent Supreme Court decision, *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, that rolled back the legal limits on corporate spending in the electoral process creates an unequal playing field and allows unlimited corporate spending to influence elections, candidate selection, and policy decisions, and to sway votes, and forces elected officials to divert their attention from the peoples’ business, or even vote against the interest of their human constituents, in order to ensure competitive campaign funds for their own reelections; and

Whereas, tens of thousands of people, organizations, and municipalities across the nation are joining with the Move to Amend movement to call for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to abolish corporate constitutional rights and the doctrine of money as free speech;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Port Townsend as follows:

1. The City of Port Townsend hereby calls on our Washington state legislators to join the tens of thousands of citizens, grassroots organizations and local governments across the country in the Move to Amend campaign to call for an Amendment to the Constitution to Abolish Corporate Personhood and return our democracy, our elections, our communities back to America's human persons and to thus reclaim our sovereign right to self-governance.
2. The City of Port Townsend calls on other communities and jurisdictions to join with us in this action by passing similar Resolutions.
3. The City of Port Townsend supports education to increase public awareness of the threats to our democracy posed by Corporate Personhood, and encourages lively discussion to build understanding and consensus to take appropriate community and municipal actions to democratically respond to these threats.


ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Port Townsend at a regular meeting thereof, held this fifth day of March 2012.



David King, Mayor

Attest:


Pamela Kolacy, MMC
City Clerk

Approved as to form:


John P. Watts
City Attorney