

**To Senate President Jeffrey Kessler,
House of Delegates Speaker Richard Thompson,
and Members of the West Virginia Legislature:**

November 27, 2012

We urge you to support a resolution calling for the reversal of the *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* U.S. Supreme Court ruling holding that corporations have a constitutional right to spend unlimited money to influence election outcomes.

We are already seeing the damaging impact of *Citizens United* on our electoral process. Reported spending by outside groups empowered by *Citizens United* rose 328 percent in the 2010 election over the previous midterm election cycle, reaching \$294 million, according to OpenSecrets.org. Outside group spending is likely to exceed \$1 billion in 2012, much of it channeled through organizations that do not disclose their donors.

The vast majority of the American people are outraged by the Court's decision. Nearly nine in 10 Americans believe that big companies have too much power. Republicans, Democrats and Independents who have learned about *Citizens United* believe by a significant margin (almost 4 to 1) that the ruling is having a negative effect.

A powerful and fast-growing movement is calling for a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United*. West Virginia would join seven state legislatures that already have called for a constitutional amendment. Three hundred cities and towns nationwide have passed resolutions or ballot initiatives calling for an amendment. In total, resolutions have been introduced or passed in 30 states.

In the 2012 legislative session, the West Virginia legislature showed significant support for a resolution calling for a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United*. The resolution had 56 sponsors in the House of Delegates and 10 sponsors in the Senate.

Cities in West Virginia are taking strong stand against *Citizens United*. So far, four West Virginia city and county councils – Charles Town, Jefferson County, Martinsburg and St. Albans – have passed resolutions, and others are considering passage.

Rescuing our democracy from control by corporations and the super wealthy requires that we overturn *Citizens United* and related rulings. We urge you to help lead the way in establishing that the people, not the big corporations, rule.

SIGNED by the following organizations:

AFSCME West Virginia
American Federation of Teachers (AFT) WV
American Friends Service Committee
Coal River Mountain Watch
Communications Workers of America – WV
Fairness West Virginia
Marshall University Democracy Matters
Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition

Public Citizen
SEIU 1199
Seneca2
Sierra Club West Virginia Chapter,
West Virginians for Affordable Health Care
West Virginia Citizen Action Group
West Virginians for Democracy
West Virginia Rivers Coalition