January, 2012

To the Honorable Members of the United States Congress:

We, the Undersigned Members of the Maryland General Assembly, call upon you to pass a constitutional amendment to reverse the United States Supreme Court’s 5-4 ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (2010), which declared that corporations enjoy the First Amendment political rights of the people and toppled dozens of state and federal laws and many decades of judicial precedent preventing corporations (and unions) from spending corporate (and union) treasury funds in political campaigns.

This radical departure from judicial precedent and democratic values has already brought a torrent of corporate money, much of it secret, into American politics, fundamentally distorting public elections and campaigns for public office. The decision poses a direct and dramatic threat to government “of the people, by the people and for the people.”

By bringing corporations into the heart of the political process, *Citizens United* changes the character of democracy. For-profit corporations (except benefit corporations) are legally bound to pursue the maximization of profits and economic advantage in all of their endeavors. This is one reason why most United States Supreme Court Justices, from Chief Justice John Marshall to Chief Justice William Rehnquist to Justice Byron White to the four dissenting justices in *Citizens United v. FEC*, have rejected the claim that corporations have political rights.

Corporations enjoy special state-conferred economic and legal advantages not enjoyed by natural persons, including limited liability of the shareholders, perpetual life of the corporation itself, and favorable treatment of the accumulation and distribution of assets. These advantages permit corporations to amass vast sums of money that are spent properly for economic purposes but not for the purposes of intervening in democratic politics and entrenching corporate power.

Article V of the United States Constitution empowers the people, the states and the Congress to use the constitutional amending process to protect republican self-government. This power has repeatedly been used by the people when the Supreme Court has undermined the progress of popular democracy.

As Members of the Maryland General Assembly, we sharply disagree with the majority decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* and call upon the United States Congress to propose and send to the states for ratification as soon as is practicable a constitutional amendment to reverse this decision and restore fair elections and democratic sovereignty to the states and to the people.
Del. Aisha Braveboy
Del. Alfred Carr
Del. Ana Sol Gutierrez
Del. Anne Healey
Del. Anne Kaiser
Del. Ariana Kelly
Del. Aruna Miller
Del. Barbara Frush
Del. Benjamin Kramer
Del. Bonnie Cullison
Del. Brian Feldman
Del. Brian McHale
Del. C.T. Wilson
Del. Cheryl Glenn
Del. Craig Zucker
Del. Curt Anderson
Del. Dan Morhaim
Del. Dana Stein
Del. Doyle Niemann
Del. Elizabeth Bobo
Del. Emmett Burns
Del. Eric Leudtke
Del. Frank Turner
Del. Galen Clagett
Del. Geraldine Valentino-Smith
Del. Guy Guzzone
Del. Hattie Harrison
Del. Heather Mizeur
Del. James Gilchrist
Del. James Hubbard
Del. James Malone
Del. James Proctor
Del. Jay Walker
Del. Jill Carter
Del. Jon Cardin
Del. John Olszewski
Del. John Wood
Del. Jolene Ivey
Del. Joseline Pena-Melnyk
Del. Joseph Minnick
Del. Joseph Vallario
Del. Justin Ross
Del. Kathleen Dumais
Del. Keiffer Mitchell
Del. Keith Haynes
Del. Kirill Reznick
Del. Kris Valderama
Del. Kumar Barve
Del. Luke Clippinger
Del. Maggie McIntosh
Del. Marvin Holmes
Del. Mary Dulany-James
Del. Mary Washington
Del. Melvin Stukes
Del. Michael Summers
Del. Michael Weir
Del. Norman Conway
Del. Pamela Beidle
Del. Peter Hammen
Del. Peter Murphy
Del. Roy George
Del. Rudolph Cane
Del. Sam Arora
Del. Sandy Rosenberg
Del. Shane Pendergrass
Del. Shane Robinson
Del. Shaw Tarrant
Del. Sheila Hixson
Del. Shirley Nathan-Pulliam
Del. Stephen Lafferty
Del. Steven DeBoy
Del. Susan Lee
Del. Talmedge Branch  Sen. Paul Pinsky
Del. Tawanna Gaines  Sen. Richard Madaleno
Del. Tom Hucker  Sen. Robert Zirkin
Del. Veronica Turner  Sen. Roger Manno
Sen. Bill Ferguson  Sen. Ronald Young
Sen. Brian Frosh  Sen. Thomas Middleton
Sen. Catherine Pugh  Sen. Ulysses Currie
Sen. Delores Kelley  Sen. Verna Jones Rodwell
Sen. Edward Kasemeyer
Sen. James Brochin
Sen. James Robey
Sen. James Rosapepe
Sen. Jamie Raskin
Sen. Jennie Forehand
Sen. Joan Carter-Conway
Sen. Joanne Benson
Sen. John Astle
Sen. Karen Montgomery
Sen. Katherine Klausmeier
Sen. Lisa Gladden
Sen. Nancy King
Sen. Nathaniel McFadden
Sen. Norman Stone