

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-70

INTRODUCED BY: COUNCILWOMAN PAM CAMERON

A RESOLUTION CALLING ON CONGRESS TO AMEND THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION TO ESTABLISH THAT CORPORATIONS ARE NOT PEOPLE AND MONEY IS NOT SPEECH.

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

WHEREAS, in a 2010 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission*, the Supreme Court ruled that corporate entities have the same rights as individual human beings to free speech protections and unrestricted spending on political speech; and

WHEREAS, the judicial bestowal of civil and political rights upon corporations usurps basic Constitutional rights guaranteed to human beings, and also empowers corporations to sue municipal and state governments for adopting laws that violate "corporate free speech," even when those laws serve to protect and defend the rights of human persons and communities; and

WHEREAS, money is property, not speech, and therefore the judicial interpretation of money as equivalent to political speech in effect contradicts the principle of one person, one vote by allowing unlimited spending by wealthy individuals and corporations to influence campaigns, elections, lawmaking and public policy decisions; and

WHEREAS, local governments play an important role in protecting the integrity of our political process.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS, CUYAHOGA COUNTY, OHIO, THAT:

Section 1: The City Council hereby resolves to call upon the United States Congress to amend the Constitution of the United States to establish that corporations are not people and money is not speech. City Council hereby directs the Clerk of Council to send a letter to the leaders of the Ohio House and Senate, to the U.S. Congressional Representative who represents the City, and to both Ohio Senators. The letter shall include a copy of this Resolution and will state that Council enacted this Resolution calling for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution declaring:

- (1) Only human beings, not corporations, are legal persons with Constitutional rights, and
- (2) Money is not equivalent to speech, and therefore regulating political contributions and spending does not equate to limiting political speech.

Section 2: The Council hereby finds and determines that all formal actions relative to the passage of this Ordinance were taken in an open meeting of this Council, that all deliberations of this Council and of its committees, if any, which results in formal action were taken in meetings open to the public, in full compliance with the applicable legal requirements, including Section 121.22 of the ORC.

CITY OF UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS, OHIO



MICHAEL DYLAN BRENNAN, MAYOR

FIRST READING: _____

PASSED: 12/16/2019

ATTEST: Kelly M. Thomas
KELLY M. THOMAS, CLERK OF COUNCIL