

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-14

**RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH AS A POSITION OF THE BUFFALO CITY COUNCIL THAT CORPORATIONS SHOULD NOT RECEIVE THE SAME CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AS NATURAL PERSONS DO, AND THAT BECAUSE MONEY IS NOT THE EQUIVALENT OF FREE SPEECH, TRANSPARANCY REQUIREMENTS AND LIMITS ON POLITICAL SPENDING WILL PROMOTE THE GOALS OF THE FIRST AMENDMENT BY ENSURING THAT ALL CITIZENS, REGARDLESS OF WEALTH, HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE THEIR POLITICAL VIEWS HEARD.**

WHEREAS, the First Amendment to the United States Constitution was designed to protect the free speech rights of individual human beings ("natural persons"), not corporations; and

WHEREAS, corporations are nowhere mentioned in the Constitution and "We the People" have never recognized the extension of fundamental constitutional rights to corporations, nor have we decreed that corporations have authority that exceeds the authority of "WE THE PEOPLE" to self-determination in our politics; and

WHEREAS, corporations are not people imbued with inalienable rights, but instead artificial entities created by the law of the states and nations; and

WHEREAS, the Court's ruling in *Citizens United v. FEC* overturned longstanding precedent prohibiting corporations from spending their general treasury funds in our elections; and

WHEREAS, *Citizens United v. FEC* purports to invalidate state laws and even state Constitutional provisions separating corporate money from elections, many of them over 100 years old; and

WHEREAS, we are now seeing the infiltration of corporate money in Iowa local politics as occurred in 2013 in Coralville where the interference of outside political groups was not sought by any of the local candidates; and

WHEREAS, legislators at all levels of government have a duty to protect democracy and guard against the potentially detrimental effects of corporate spending in local, state, and federal elections;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IN RESOLVED that the Buffalo City Council calls upon the United States Congress to pass and send to the states for ratification a constitutional amendment to reverse *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*; and to clarify that: Corporations are not entitled to the Constitutional protections or "rights" of natural persons; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that money is not speech, and therefore regulating election-related spending is not equivalent to limiting political speech; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED City of Buffalo hereby includes in its Federal Legislative Agenda support for an Amendment to the United States Constitution related to campaign finance reform and ending the false doctrine of corporate constitutional rights and, by sending a copy of this resolution to each federal legislator representing the City of Buffalo, respectfully urges Iowa's Congressional delegation to prioritize congressional proposal of an amendment to the United States Constitution addressing the threats to representative government identified in this resolution so that the states may ratify it.

Passed, approved and adopted this 03 day of March, 2014.

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Doug Anderson, Mayor