

**Mentor Initiative in Support of Movement to Amend the U.S. 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. the Federal Elections Commission*, the Supreme Court overturned some provisions of the federal Campaign Reform Act enacted in 2002, and ruled that corporate entities, and labor unions, have the same rights as individuals to unrestricted spending on political speech; and

WHEREAS, in reaching its decision, a majority of the Supreme Court interpreted the First Amendment of the Constitution to afford corporations the same free speech protection as natural persons; and

WHEREAS, the Court's decision in effect allows unlimited corporate spending to influence campaigns, elections, lawmaking and public policy decisions; and

WHEREAS, the Court's decision in *Citizens United* severely restricts the ability to enact reasonable campaign finance reforms and regulations regarding corporate political activity; and

WHEREAS, the people of the United States have previously used the constitutional amendment process to correct decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court that are widely deemed to be egregious or wrongly decided or significantly out-of-step with the prevailing values of the populace; and

WHEREAS, the preservation and protection of our democracy depends upon the informed participation of the citizens; and

WHEREAS, local governments have an important role in protecting the integrity of our political processes;

THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by initiative by the People of the City of Mentor, Ohio the new Chapter 119 of the Ordinances of the City of Mentor:

Section 119.01. Beginning in the year 2015, the City Manager and City Council shall designate one day in the month of February following the November federal elections, "Democracy Day". On this day, the City Manager and City Council shall sponsor a Public Hearing in a public space within the City. The City shall publicize the Public Hearing on its website and through area media at least one (1) month in advance of the hearing. The Public Hearing will examine the impact of political contributions of corporations, unions, PACS and Super-PACS on the City. The City Manager and at least one (1) City Councilperson shall submit testimony at the public hearing. In addition, all citizens of Mentor will be permitted to submit oral testimony for a period of at least 5 minutes per citizen.

Section 119.02. Within one (1) week following the Public Hearing, the City Manager shall send a letter to the leaders of the Ohio House and Senate, and Mentor's U.S. Congressional representative, and both U.S. Senators stating that the citizens of Mentor in November 2014 voted in support of a Citizen's initiative calling for a constitutional amendment declaring:

- A) Only human beings, not corporations, are legal persons with constitutional rights;
- B) Money is not equivalent to speech, and therefore regulating political contributions and spending is not equivalent to limiting political speech.

Section 119.03. The biennial Public Hearing will continue for a period of ten (10) years through February 2025 or until a constitutional amendment reflecting the principles set forth in Section 119.02 is ratified by $\frac{3}{4}$ of state legislatures.

Section 119.04. This initiative shall take effect and be included in the City Ordinances at the earliest date permitted under Chapter 117.08 of the City of Mentor Codified Ordinances.