

Carpenter, Matthew

From: Kate Tepper [minw1@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, March 19, 2012 12:47 AM
To: gaemail
Subject: Testimony for DISCLOSE ACT

Kathleen Mary Tepper
186 Gillies Lane
Norwalk, CT 06854

March 16, 201

To: Government Administrations and Election Committee
Re: Disclose Act.

When human beings spend their money, by whatever method, cash, check, credit card or barter, we almost always know (or can trace) the name and source of the exchange and both the seller and the buyer of the product. I say almost always but, if one carefully reads the disastrous January 2010 Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, one understands that for Corporations this kind of disclosure no longer applies.

The *Citizens United* decision awarded corporations a First Amendment right to use unlimited amounts of money from their treasuries to support or oppose candidates for elected office. These corporate behemoths are exempted from the normal monetary disclosure that that a human buyer and/or seller are generally subject to. The law says, in effect:

"[T]he Government may commit a constitutional wrong when by law it identifies certain preferred speakers. By taking the right to speak from some and giving it to others, the Government deprives the disadvantaged person or class of the right to use speech to strive to establish worth, standing, and respect for the speaker's voice... The First Amendment protects speech and speaker, and the ideas that flow from each."

This sounds protective of human rights, until you realize that the "disadvantaged class" referred to are corporations! Large and even not-so-large corporations have a great deal of money, and can easily mobilize resources on a scale that vastly outmatch anything that real people can do. Not only that, but corporations can now spend their money to gain political leverage without disclosing the source or amount of that money.

Corporations have extraordinary resources and the rather obvious conclusion is that corporate money can distort elections and the political process. This being the case I believe it is imperative that, in any political advertising, the names and source of all donors to such advertising and lobbying must be legally required to disclose their names and/or affiliations to the public and the amount of money they have donated to any political cause or candidate must be revealed on each and every transaction.

We in Connecticut are fortunate that our legislators have already taken steps in this direction and I urge you to further strengthen Connecticut's Disclose Act.

We can no longer afford to have money subverting our Democracy by turning it into a Corporatocracy.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Mary Tepper.

3/19/2012