

Walter, Judith

From: Jere Armen <jarmen49@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 8:46 AM
To: GAETestimony
Subject: HJ 64

To the members of the Joint Committee on Government Administration and Elections of the Connecticut General Assembly:

I urge you to report favorably to the General Assembly on HJ 64, a bill calling for an "Article V" Constitutional Convention for the limited purpose of amending the United States Constitution to obviate the effects of and overturn, by citizen mandate, the Supreme Court's ruling on *Citizens United vs. Federal Election Commission*.

The flood of money into election campaigns has had the pernicious effect of removing the outcome of elections from a dependency "on the people alone" (*The Federalist Papers*, No. 52) to a dependency on the highest bidder; from a voter's decision based on the merits of the candidate to a decision based on the candidate whose message is heard most loudly, frequently, and persistently, regardless of the truth or merits of that message. The effect of this money is to pervert the most fundamental principle of our representative, republican democracy, that of electing persons to act in the interests of the people, establishing in its stead representatives beholden from their first day in office to those who supplied the money to get them there.

Let us also not underestimate the effect that this flood of money from unnamed and third-party sources has on our elected representatives themselves: it is estimated that, on average, a delegate to the Congress in Washington, D.C. spends three to four hours *every day* raising funds for his or her next election campaign or for paying off current campaign debts. Those three to four hours are not spent doing the people's business, or conferring with the people, or researching current legislation, or considering broader policy questions. You of the General Assembly are well aware of how much time each of you spends in similar efforts.

It is past time to reverse this undermining of our government, to rethink our campaigns and elections practices, and to end the perversion of obscene amounts of money donated from sources unidentified and unidentifiable through an amendment to the Constitution that will establish, once and for all, where the power of elections should lie: on the will of an informed electorate, unbiased by slick expensive messaging, alone.

Thank you for your attention to this request. I look forward to hearing of a favorable decision by the committee.

Sincerely,
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