

Resolution Regarding Constitutional Rights for People, not Corporations

Whereas: the U.S. Constitution, as amended, describes the rights and freedoms granted to people, and makes no mention of corporations; and

Whereas: legal entities such as corporations are neither born nor naturalized in the US, and are therefore not entitled to the privileges or immunities of US citizens; and

Whereas: the First Amendment is designed to protect free speech rights of human beings, not corporations; and

Whereas: there is a profound difference between human beings with an inalienable right to self-expression and what a human being may possess, such as money or property; and

Whereas: multi-national corporations may be owned, in whole or in part, by foreign interests that should have no influence on elections in the US; and

Whereas: over the last 3 decades, a divided United States Supreme Court has repeatedly ruled that money equals speech, transforming the First Amendment into a powerful tool for corporations seeking to evade and invalidate democratically enacted reforms; and

Whereas: the corporate takeover of the right to free speech reached its extreme conclusion in the US Supreme Court ruling *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission*; and

Whereas: the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Citizens United v. F.E.C.* overturned longstanding precedents prohibiting corporations from spending their general treasury funds in our elections; and

Whereas: the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Citizens United v. F.E.C.* has unleashed a torrent of corporate money into our political process unmatched by any campaign expenditure totals in US history; and

Whereas: the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Citizens United v. F.E.C.* presents a serious and direct threat to our democracy and national security; and

Whereas: the people of the United States have previously used the constitutional amendment process to correct those egregiously wrong decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court that go to the heart of our democracy and self-government;

Now, therefore, be it resolved: that the King County Democratic Central Committee hereby calls on the Washington State Legislature to pass a joint resolution urging the U.S. Congress to pass and send to the states for ratification a constitutional amendment to establish that a corporation shall not be considered a person eligible for rights accorded to human beings under the U.S. Constitution, as amended, and that the use of money to influence elections or the acts of public officials shall not be considered a protected form of speech.

Adopted _____ *by* _____