

## RESOLUTION TOWN OF WATERTOWN BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**Whereas:** Government of, by, and for the people has long been a cherished American value, and We the People's fundamental and inalienable right to self-govern, and thereby secure rights of life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness is guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, and;

**Whereas:** Free and fair elections are essential to democracy and effective self-governance, and;

**Whereas:** The 2010 *Citizens United v. the Federal Election Commission* case, which was decided by a split (5 to 4) decision, removed the legal limits on contributions and expenditures in elections: (1) creates an unequal playing field and allows unlimited spending by individual persons, corporations, unions, and other artificial entities to influence elections, candidate selection, and policy decisions, and (2) forces elected officials to divert their attention from the concerns of We the People, or even vote against the interest of their human constituents, in order to raise campaign funds for their own re-election, and;

**Whereas:** Corporations and unions are legal entities chartered by the government, which, while they may be useful to the functioning of our economic system, are not human beings and thus do should not have the same Constitutional rights as American citizens, and;

**Whereas:** Allowing for the unlimited contributions and spending of money on elections is contrary to the democratic principle of one person, one vote. It allows those with the most money to have an unfair advantage and undue influence in a political system that was intended to ensure that all citizens have equal access to and influence in the political process. The great wealth of big unions and multinational or large corporations allows them to wield undue influence on this national electoral process, and;

**Whereas:** Millions of people, and Local, County, and State governments across the nation are joining with the Move to Amend Campaign and passing resolutions demanding an Amendment to the U.S. Constitution to: (1) eliminate the extension of Constitutional rights — originally reserved for human beings — to corporate entities, and (2) abolish the doctrine that political contributions and expenditures are equivalent to free speech rights.



NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Watertown Board of Supervisors seeks to reclaim democracy from the expansion of corporate personhood rights and the corrupting influence of unregulated political contributions and spending. We stand with the Move to Amend campaign and communities across the country to support passage of an amendment to the United States Constitution stating:

**1. Only human beings -- not corporations, unions, limited liability companies, non-profit organizations, or similar associations and corporate entities -- are endowed with constitutional rights, and**

**2. Money is not speech, and therefore regulating political contributions and spending is not equivalent to limiting political speech.**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Watertown Clerk is directed to forward a copy of this resolution to our state and federal representatives, directing them to enact resolutions and legislation to advance this effort.

Date: 8-12-2013

Signed: Richard Gimble