

# Are Corporations People? No!

## Is Money Speech? No!!

On January 21, 2010, in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, a bitterly divided Supreme Court ruled that corporate spending to influence elections cannot be limited under the First Amendment. In so doing, 5 justices effectively declared that corporations are indistinguishable from *people* under the US Constitution and the Bill of Rights. They likewise obliterated the common-sense distinction between constitutionally protected *free speech* and heretofore regulated *free spending*.

“Last week, the Supreme Court reversed a century of law to open the floodgates for special interests — including foreign corporations — to spend without limit in our elections. Well, I don’t think American elections should be bankrolled by America’s most powerful interests, or worse, by foreign entities.”

– **President Barack Obama**

“I think that there’s going to be, over time, a backlash, ... when you see the amounts of union and corporate money that’s going to go into political campaigns.”

– **Sen. John McCain (R-Arizona)**

“This decision was a terrible mistake. Presented with a relatively narrow legal issue, the Supreme Court chose to roll back laws that have limited the role of corporate money in federal elections since Teddy Roosevelt was president.”

– **Sen. Russ Feingold (D-Wisconsin)**

“With this decision, corporations can now directly pour vast amounts of corporate money, through independent expenditures, into the electoral swamp already flooded with corporate campaign PAC contribution dollars.”

– **Ralph Nader**

“There is no doubt that *Citizens United*... signals the end of whatever legitimate claim could otherwise have been made by the Roberts Court to an incremental and minimalist approach to constitutional adjudication, to a modest view of the judicial role vis-à-vis the political branches, or to a genuine concern with adherence to precedent.”

– **Laurence H. Tribe, Harvard Professor of Constitutional Law**

### Join the Campaign to Overrule the Supreme Court

In April of 2011, voters in Madison and Dane County passed referenda (by high margins) in support of a Constitutional amendment to make clear that (a) only humans have human rights and (b) free speech does not equal free spending. These referenda were on the ballot because of citizen action, specifically a signature-gathering effort by members of South Central Wisconsin United To Amend (SCWUTA). Since then 60 other Wisconsin cities, villages, towns, and counties have done likewise.

Please consider joining the movement to amend the Constitution in your local area. Here’s how:

- **Gather signatures to put a referendum to a vote in your local municipality!**
- **Pass resolutions in support of the amendment thru local organizations!**
- **Push your state legislators to make Wisconsin the 17th state to petition Congress for the “We the People” amendment.**

You don’t have to reinvent the wheel! SCWUTA ([wimta.org](http://wimta.org)) has had lots of practice with this kind of grass-roots activism. We’re here to help. Just ask: [wisconsin@unitedtoamend.org](mailto:wisconsin@unitedtoamend.org).