

As of February 3, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
235 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: *Citizens United* and the Fair Elections Now Act (H.R. 1826 & S. 752)

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

As religious leaders, we believe in equality and justice for all people and in building the common good. In a democracy, these ideals cannot be realized, however, if the rules governing the electoral process actively or passively favor one segment of the population over another.

We believe existing campaign finance laws already permit the unfair influence of persons and groups with extraordinary wealth over the political process by providing them with special access to elected officials. This special access ultimately results in legislative outcomes that reflect the needs of those with the financial means to make political contributions, and not the needs of the poor or disenfranchised.

The recent Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* will surely amplify the voices of the wealthy campaign donors and bring new powerful players to fore at the expense of everyone else.

We believe Congress must address both the *Citizens United* decision and the problems of the current campaign finance system by passing the Fair Elections Now Act (S. 752 and H.R. 1826). This measure would empower average people to participate in politics with small donations, and would return the gaze of our elected officials solely to the needs of their districts and the nation as a whole, rather than the interests of those with significant financial resources for campaigns.

We pledge our support and we pledge to work among members of our churches, synagogues, mosques, gurdwaras (a Sikh place of worship) and temples throughout the nation to encourage support for your efforts to bring about reform. As you know, the Fair Elections Now Act was sponsored by Assistant Majority Leader Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) in the Senate and House Democratic Caucus Chairman John Larson (D-Conn.) and Congressman Walter Jones (R-N.C.) in the House. In the House, the legislation has attracted nearly 130 cosponsors. With a strong Fair Elections system in place, candidates will spend less time courting the narrow slice of Americans who currently fund campaigns and engage a larger, more active citizenry.

We hope in the wake of the Supreme Court's decision you will support the Fair Elections Now Act so that Congress can act effectively on the people's business.

Signed,

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Recent Past President of the National Council of Churches (2008-2009)
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