



COMMON CAUSE  
*Holding Power Accountable*



PUBLICCITIZEN

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## **COALITION OF PUBLIC INTEREST GROUPS LAUNCHES 2014 BALLOT MEASURE TO RESTRICT CORPORATE MONEY IN ARKANSAS ELECTIONS**

**Ballot Initiative Presents New Way for States to Address  
US Supreme Court's *Citizens United* Ruling**

**Initiative Would Also Call for a Constitutional Amendment to  
Restore Democracy to the People**

### **Joint Statement of Common Cause, Free Speech For People, Public Citizen and Regnat Populus**

It's Arkansas' turn.

State after state has been taking action to challenge the US Supreme Court's 2010 ruling in *Citizens United v. FEC*, which swept away a century of precedent barring corporate money in our elections and which unleashed unlimited corporate cash into our politics. Now Arkansas is stepping up to join the fight to restore democracy to the people.

Arkansas' own [Regnat Populus](#) – a group whose name was taken from the Arkansas state motto and means “the People Rule”—has joined with national organizational partners Common Cause, Free Speech For People, and Public Citizen to advance a citizen-initiated act that would restrict corporate money in elections in Arkansas and call for a constitutional amendment to overturn the *Citizens United* ruling and reclaim our democracy.

In recent weeks and months, Arkansans have watched a parade of ethics abuses march by. This carnival of corruption was led by the likes of State Treasurer Martha Shoffner, State Senator Paul Bookout, and Lt. Gov. Mark Darr. However, these ethics abuses of misappropriation of funds were already illegal under Arkansas law.

Their misdeeds, unfortunately, are dwarfed by a much greater breach of the public trust which, thanks to the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* ruling, is now perfectly legal. As a result of the *Citizens United* ruling, corporations within and outside of the state may now dump millions, if not hundreds of millions, of corporate dollars into our elections. The nation's highest court now views corporations – government-created entities – as having the same constitutional rights as natural persons to influence an election. This ruling presents a direct and serious threat to our democracy and to the fundamental American promise of government of, by and for the people.

In the face of this threat, we must stand up to defend our Republic. Today, we are filing with Arkansas Attorney General Dustin McDaniel a ballot initiative for the 2014 election that will restrict corporate political expenditures in Arkansas elections and call for an amendment to the US Constitution which makes clear that corporations are not people with constitutional rights and that Congress and the states can limit political spending. The proposed [“Act to Restrict Corporate Spending to Influence Elections in Arkansas”](#) would condition the state’s granting of limited liability protection for any corporation doing business in Arkansas on that corporation’s compliance with the corporate spending ban in Arkansas elections.

It is Arkansas’ turn to make a stand and to join the 16 other states already on record calling for a constitutional amendment to reclaim our democracy. And, it is Arkansas’ turn to lead the way with new restrictions on corporate money in our elections.