

I-1329

WE THE PEOPLE ★ Claiming our Democracy

Get **BIG MONEY** out of politics!

WA*mend*.org

Talking Points

- If passed, our citizens' initiative will mean that Washington State joins 16 other states calling for an amendment to get big money out of politics.
- This amendment would have three basic points:
 1. The rights of people protected by the Constitution of the United States are the rights of natural persons only.
 2. All citizens should have equal voice in the political process, and no person or artificial legal entity should gain undue influence over government as a result of financial resources. Federal, state, and local governments shall be fully empowered to regulate all political contributions and expenditures to meet this goal.
 3. All political contributions and expenditures shall be publicly disclosed in a full and timely manner.
- Democracy means one person, one vote. Our Supreme Court has decided that those with money can spend unlimited and anonymous dollars to influence elections and legislation, using 'independent' committees, organizations and SuperPACs.
- Allowing unlimited money in elections means our representatives spend most of their time fundraising instead of working on real solutions to real problems. The time they do spend on legislation must serve the needs of their major donors, not the needs of we the people.
- Most independent spending (70-80%) buys negative advertising – because it's effective. Allowing unlimited "dark" money in elections greatly increases negative advertising.
- We are not against corporations. But they should NOT be treated as the equal of real people in the constitution. When unlimited political power is given to unchecked economic power, the result is plutocracy, not democracy. We must clarify the difference between corporations and real people in the constitution, so that courts don't get to decide what rights corporations have – WE do.
- Our amendment would apply to unions and non-profits – any non-human, artificially-created entity or special interest. 501(c)(4) non-profit organizations must not be allowed to receive and spend unlimited money without disclosing who their donors are.

TIPS

- ... You should politely ENGAGE people as they approach, or they will likely ignore you.
- ... Be visible and friendly. If you're comfortable wearing an Uncle Sam hat, go to your local party shop and buy one – they're about \$3. Tape an "UNPAID VOLUNTEER" sign to the top of the hat – when you're in a crowd, every inch of height helps!
- ... And/or you can wear a poster (on our website, under Toolkit/Posters), slipped into a clear plastic protector sleeve and strung around your neck, front or back. Make sure you tape an "UNPAID VOLUNTEER" sign over part of the poster, diagonally – or however you think it looks best and most attention-grabbing.
- ... If you're using a table, you can stand the poster up on the table. But don't sit down unless you have to. You won't get as much business if you sit!
- ... The petitions will be either 11 x 14 or 11 x 17 size. Cut a piece of cardboard to act as a pad, or if you're using a table, tape the petitions to the table.
- ... Bring extra pens and petitions.
- ... Bring WAmend SlimJims and "Talking Points."
- ... Finding the right spot can make all the difference. You can stand on any public property as long as you're not blocking traffic – including pedestrians on sidewalks. Here a few ideas:
 - The park
 - The grocery store
 - The workplace
 - Farmers' markets
 - The library
 - Public transit
 - Public gatherings (parades, rallies, festivals, etc.)

WHAT TO SAY

- ... Ask a question that will serve as an opening to a conversation. Examples: Have you heard about our petition? How do you feel about all the big money in politics these days?
- ... Remember to ask them if they are registered to vote in the state of Washington.
- ... Encourage someone with a lot of questions to read the full text on the back of the initiative or give them our "Talking Points" or a "SlimJim" handout (available on our website under Toolkit/Handouts"). Don't try to answer questions if you're unsure of the answer – refer them to the website, or they can email info@wamend.org
- ... Do NOT engage in lengthy discussions with people. That wastes your time, creates a negative impression, and keeps you from talking to other more willing people. If anyone thinks you're harassing people in ANY way – the property owner/manager may ask you to leave. So please always be courteous and polite.
- ... It is OK if some people don't want to help or disagree with our initiative. That is their right and **we must clearly respect that**. Thank these people for considering signing, and quickly **move on** to other people. Don't get frustrated if people pass you by. They may be from out of state, they've already signed, they don't have the time, or they're just not in a good mood. That's all okay, and they might sign next time.