



NEWS RELEASE

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Big Money Wins, Voters Lose with Decision to Eliminate Contribution Limits

Vote FOR I-166 Becomes Even More Important

HELENA – Responding to yesterday’s decision eliminating Montana’s contribution limits, Stand with Montanans: Corporation Aren’t People – Ban Corporate Campaign Spending calls on Montanans to fight back against big money in elections by voting FOR I-166.

“Yesterday, Federal Judge Charles Lovell decided that big money is more important than Montana’s fair elections,” said C.B. Pearson, treasurer for the Initiative 166 of Stand with Montanans, Corporations Aren’t People – Ban Corporate Campaign Spending and a long time campaign reform advocate.

“Montana voters have a chance with a vote for I-166 to set a Montana policy on fair elections and hold our candidates accountable for that policy. This bad decision undermines generations of common sense to prevent corruption in our elections. Now voters support for I-166 becomes more urgent.”

I-166, which has qualified for the November ballot, would make it state policy that corporations are not entitled to constitutional rights because they are not human beings and that money is property it is not speech. It also charges Montana elected and appointed officials, both state and federal; to promote this policy including support for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to overturn the *Citizens United* decision.

“We support the efforts of our attorney general to stay this decision that comes just as Montanans are getting ready to vote,” said Pearson. “Letting unlimited contributions during the final weeks of our elections is a recipe for corruption. It is clear that the courts are making our elections a mess and that Montanans will have to work hard in the coming

months to make sure we do not lose our Montana traditions of fairness. By passing I-166, Montana voters can take a stand in support of clean and fair elections and against the takeover by big money.”

“In addition we are calling on all candidates, all contributors, all political parties and all political action committees to adhere to current Montana contribution limits and not participant in an unregulated system foisted on Montana by American Tradition Partnership,” said Pearson.

American Tradition Partnership, formerly Western Tradition Partnership, was the primary plaintiff in the challenge to Montana’s *Corrupt Practices Act*. The group has been involved in a series of legal challenges and complaints related to Montana campaign finance law. In 2011, the Montana Commissioner of Political Practices found that the group violated Montana law by soliciting unlimited contributions, refusing to disclose those donations, and spending that money on independent attack ads and mailers targeting candidates in the 2010 election.

“Montana has a long, proud tradition of clean and fair elections,” said Pearson, “But American Tradition Partnership has nothing but disdain for this tradition. In fact, if they have their way, our elections will be bought by unlimited, secret, and untraceable money flowing from big, out-of-state corporations and wealthy individuals.”

“Now is the time for all Montanans to stand together to make sure our system of fair elections is not lost by voting for I-166,” said Pearson.

More information is available at www.StandWithMontanans.org, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/StandWithMontanans, on Twitter, @STANDwMONTANANS, and by calling (406) 356-NOV6 (6686).