

202 LEVEL TRAINING



HISTORY AS OUR GUIDE

The majority of all U.S. Constitutional amendments included a convention campaign. We have the Bill of Rights (10) because New York and Virginia called for a convention to propose those amendments.

A good example is the 17th Amendment. When the states got close to the $\frac{2}{3}$ needed to force a convention, Congress reacted and proposed the amendment themselves. The Congressional Research Service refers to this as the “prodding effect.”

A REPUBLIC, IF YOU CAN KEEP IT

The founders of our country sacrificed greatly to give us a government "dependent upon the people alone," and we are in danger of losing that vision.

Because of this broken system, our lawmakers are forced to become telemarketers, spending up to 75% of their time fundraising, instead of serving the people. This results in political outcomes that are disconnected from the will of the people, leaving us unable to fix any of the critical issues of our time until we end this corruption.

A TRULY CROSS-PARTISAN ISSUE

96% of Americans believe it's important to eliminate the corruption in our political system. When asked what they mean by "corruption" they talked about the influence of political donors and special interest groups. This means, of course, that 96% of the people in your state and 96% of voters in your district.

In recent polls, this issue rates as the #1 issue in the country - higher than jobs, the economy and national security! Why? Because voters know this is the problem we must fix first.

SOLELY TO ADDRESS CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

We know a convention can be limited to a single issue because right now Congress is constitutionally required to call a convention upon the applications of $\frac{2}{3}$ of the states, currently 34. Since our country's founding there have been over 400 applications for a convention, submitted from 49 states on a variety of issues.

So, if Congress could take 20 applications from Issue A... 10 from Issue B... and 4 from Issue C... count them all together to reach 34, Congress would have to call that convention tomorrow, but they haven't because applications are counted in separate piles based on subject matter. No one subject has ever reached $\frac{2}{3}$ of the states necessary to hold a convention. Each time we pass our resolution in a state it's added to the pile for "Campaign Finance Reform,"

SOLELY TO ADDRESS CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

All peer reviewed legal reports done on this subject conclude that the states have the power to call a convention limited to a single subject and that there are multiple mechanisms in place for those limitations to be enforced. These reports include: The Department of Justice under both Carter and Reagan, The American Bar Association, and multiple reports from the Congressional Research Service.

A CROSS-PARTISAN SOLUTION

Any Amendment coming out of a convention with a realistic chance of being ratified by 38 states will have to have broad, cross-partisan support. There are ideas on both sides of the political aisle about how to make our elections work better for the average American. This resolution simply calls for that conversation somewhere other than Congress.

One possible outcome that seems to have strong bi-partisan support is an amendment that simply acknowledges Congress and the states have the right to regulate elections how they see fit, which has been introduced but not acted upon by Congress. This “state’s rights” approach had been the law of the land until 2010.

A CROSS-PARTISAN SOLUTION

Montana is a good example of what's wrong with the current system. They had 100 years of common sense campaign finance laws that they wanted to keep, but were unable to because of these Supreme Court cases.

The bottom line is that any amendment will need to be approved by 75% of the states.

FREE SPEECH IS SACRED

The 1st Amendment is our most cherished amendment, and no one is talking about changing it.

All we're talking about here is getting to a place of common sense in our elections to ensure all Americans have a voice. Prior to 2010 many states had over a century of reasonable campaign finance laws in place without infringing upon the 1st Amendment. But, those laws have been gutted by the Supreme Court. What we need, in the least, is an amendment to our Constitution that goes above our runaway Supreme Court and allows the states the right to establish their own laws.

MORE VOICES, MORE CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Regulating election spending is similar to capping testimony at a committee hearing to two or three minutes. The 1st Amendment is not affected when committees do this. It's understood that this common sense practice allows for MORE voices to be heard.

The idea of allowing unlimited amounts of money to flow into our elections is a fairly new concept. Up until the 1970's, the Supreme Court of the United States, whether controlled by conservative or liberal justices, considered limits on political spending constitutional and reasonable in order to preserve the integrity of our elections.

REPUBLICAN HISTORICAL CHAMPIONS OF REFORM

It should be noted that Republicans have historically been leaders on campaign finance reform, from Teddy Roosevelt with the Tillman Act in 1907 to Barry Goldwater's impassioned speeches for reform in the U.S. Senate, and John McCain with McCain-Feingold in 2002.

OUR RESOLUTION DOESN'T DICTATE THE SOLUTION

The Supreme Court decision in Citizens United anticipated the need for further reform, and there are solutions to fix this corruption without touching Citizens United. We just need the ability to debate the various ideas and arrive at a solution that works and submit it to the states for ratification.

Congress can have that debate any time, but they don't. Our resolution simply calls for this national conversation somewhere other than Congress about how to make our election process work better for the average American. It doesn't dictate the outcome.

Do you think there is any part of our election system that could work better for the average American?

“I THINK THE SUPREME COURT GOT IT RIGHT IN ‘CITIZENS UNITED.’”

IDEAS ACROSS THE AISLE

Here are a few potential solutions that address the problem without affecting CU.

One state senator believes that corporations should be able to donate unlimited amounts of money to his campaign.... BUT, he thinks they should have to be from his district. He hates big, outside money pouring in from out of state (or from out of the country) and telling their state what to do. He calls this the “Donor/Voter Rule” - If you can vote for me you can donate to my campaign.

Others ideas include a limited tax credit for small donations to increase the number of people who can give to political campaigns, or full disclosure and transparency of who is funding a political campaign.