

Amending the constitution essay example

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



I am a strong supporter of the Overturn Citizens United Amendment, the purpose of which is to override the Supreme Court decision that basically allowed unlimited donations from corporations and wealthy people during elections. I believe that the political system in this country has already been badly corrupted by big money and now the five conservative justices on the Supreme Court have swept away all limits. In short, I regard this as one of the worst Supreme Court decisions since the Dred Scott case or Plessey v. Ferguson, and an absolute disaster for democracy in this country. In 2000, the federal elections cost \$3 billion, which increased to \$4.1 billion in 2004 and \$5.3 billion in 2008, while the off-year elections cost \$1.6 billion in 1998, \$2.2 billion in 2002, \$2.8 billion in 2006 and \$3.6 billion in 2010 (OpenSecrets.org, 2011). Almost all of this money came from large corporations and wealthy individuals, who can now give unlimited amounts of money because of Citizens United and other recent Supreme Court decisions. In the past, the Supreme Court had maintained that unlimited campaign donations gave rise to “corruption or the appearance of corruption”, but the Roberts Court denied this (Hasen, 2011, p. 583). John Roberts, Samuel Alito and the other three Republican justices took “an expansive view of corporate free speech rights” when striking down all such limits (Hasen, p. 587). They also overturned provisions in the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (McCain-Feingold Act) of 2002 that put limits on expenditures for television and radio advertisements designed to influence elections.

I am of course very realistic about the unlikelihood of Congress passing this amendment by the required two-thirds majority and sending it to the states.

That will never happen because the members of Congress are basically in the pay of the same corporate and elite interests that benefit from being allowed to give unlimited campaign donations. The only way this amendment will even have a chance of being passed is through the non-traditional method that has never been done before: calling a constitutional convention to propose it and then sending it to the states for ratification. Of course, a convention would also have the power to change the Constitution in a number of ways, and it could allow this amendment to be ratified by a popular vote instead of three-quarters of the states. In that case, I am certain that it would pass (U. S. Constitution Online).

REFERENCES

Hasen, R. L. (2011). "Citizens United and the Illusion of Coherence".

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U. S. Constitution Online. Constitutional Amendments

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