

Testimony before the House Committee on Rules on HJM6 April 10 2013

A small group of Ashland citizens went to the Ashland City Council concerned about the amount of money flooding into elections and the distorting effect that it was having on the whole political process. After the Council decided that we were determined in our demand to let the citizens of Ashland have their collective say on this matter, they passed an ordinance permitting them to put a question on the November 2012 ballot. The question was elegantly simple:

“Shall Ashland voters instruct Congress to amend U.S. Constitution to grant only natural persons Constitutional rights and limit campaign spending?”

The citizens voted overwhelmingly (79.64%) “yes”. This was despite the fact that our public action in support of the question consisted of a handful of flyers and about 25 yard signs.

As you may know, Ashland is regarded by its neighbors as ‘progressive’, “four square miles surrounded by a sea of normality”. We wondered, therefore, how our message would be received in Medford, our much larger neighbor and county center to the north, as well as the other 16 cities of Jackson County. And that is where we have been working intensely for the last couple of months. We have talked to small businesses on Main Street, trade groups, militias, as well as landowners, miners, timber owners, and farmers, who have been predominantly conservative. And they get it. They are appalled when they hear that entities such as corporations, unions, and trade associations, are now considered to have rights under our U.S. Constitution, rights they thought were only for living, breathing people. Our interactions lead us to strongly believe that this is a trans-partisan issue, not left or right, not republican or democrat. Virtually everyone agrees that Congress is broken and confidence in the institution is at an all-time low. We can start to address this problem when the people feel that their views actually count. We ask for your full support of HJM6.

John Limb and Linda Sturgeon

Move-to-Amend Jackson County