

April 9, 2013

To: House Rules Committee  
From: Willard Rodgers, Common Cause Oregon  
Re: Support for HJM 6

Chairman Garrett, Vice-Chairs Hicks and Hoyle, members of the committee. Thank you for this opportunity to testify. My name is Bill Rodgers, a member of the steering committee of Common Cause Oregon, which is part of Oregonians for Restoring Constitutional Democracy.

I am going to give a brief overview of what happened last year in Eugene, where I reside. On February 12, 2012, the Eugene City Council passed Resolution No. 5055, which stated that corporations, unions and special interests should not have the same constitutional rights that natural persons possess. The resolution further stated that action is needed to stop unlimited independent campaign expenditures of corporations, unions and special interest groups, which resulted from the Citizens United decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. Finally, the resolution asked Congress to send to the States a constitutional amendment reversing the impacts of Citizens United.

In July, the Eugene City Council voted to put this measure to a vote of the citizens of Eugene. On November 6, that advisory question was overwhelmingly approved: 73.6% voted yes, 26.4% voted no. The support was broadly based: in all 36 precincts of the city, at least 61% voted yes. The only spending that was done in support of the issue came through a small PAC created for this purpose, which raised less than \$500 to fund the production and distribution of 100 lawn signs. Moreover, the strong favorable vote came despite an editorial in our daily newspaper, the Register Guard, in opposition to the measure.

What happened in Eugene is consistent with votes on similar measures in other cities and counties across Oregon and across the U.S., and with the findings from numerous polls: by a wide margin, Americans think that corporations have too much influence on elections, thereby subverting our representative democracy. HJM6 is a step toward restraining that influence, and we urge that it be approved.

Thank you.