

HJM6 Testimony

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Chairman Garrett, Vice chairs Hicks and Hoyle, members of the committee. Thank you for this opportunity to testify regarding the need to amend the US Constitution to eliminate the two court-created doctrines of corporate personhood and money equals free speech.

I first want to thank the sponsors and co-sponsors of HJM6. Thank you to Rep. Clem for introducing our resolution and to co-sponsoring Representatives Barnhart, Dembrow, Holvey, Tomei and Witt.

I represent the coalition *Oregonians for Restoring Constitutional Democracy*, which consists of Alliance for Democracy, Oregon Common Cause, all 8 Oregon affiliates of Move to Amend, Oregon PeaceWorks, Oregon Main Street Alliance, the Rural Organizing Project, and Tax Fairness Oregon.

HJM6 is the only memorial introduced which addresses the double headed monster of these court-created doctrines. HJM5 addresses only the 2010 US Supreme Court decision, *Citizens United v FEC*. SJM3 and 9 both only address the question of money in the political process and our ability to regulate it.

Many Oregonians became especially concerned about these questions with the US Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision giving corporations the right to contribute in so-called independent campaigns. But the coalition realizes that this is only the most recent court decision which has given constitutional rights to corporations at the expense of citizens. During the 1970s, *Buckley v Valeo* as well as the *Bank of Boston v Bellotti* decisions lessened the ability of government to regulate campaign contributions and expenditures by both individuals and/or corporations. That is one head of this monster.

The other head are the multiple court decisions which have given the people's rights to corporations on the mistaken belief that corporations are in fact people. Each time these rights have been given, our ability to control the acts of corporations has lessened until today we question who is sovereign, the people or the corporations.

Such a question can only be answered through an amendment which addresses both problems. HJM6 calls for Oregon's congressional delegation to support and send to us for our approval an amendment which ends the aforementioned court-created doctrines. Only such a Constitutional amendment addressing both issues can do this. And we call for this committee to send this memorial to the full House with a Do-Pass recommendation.