

Public Financing of Congressional Elections Resolution

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Support Of H.R 1826 an S.752--The Fair Elections Now Act And Commendation of Sen. Maria Cantwell

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3 WHEREAS corporations currently exert undue influence over elected federal officials and the legislative process due to campaign contributions by their officers and PACs;

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5 WHEREAS the recent Supreme Court Citizen's United decision will make corporate corruption of the system even worse by allowing corporations to fund unlimited advertising in support or in opposition to a candidate;

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7 WHEREAS when voters in November, 2008 exit polls were asked what issue was very important in determining their vote that day, the top answer--ahead of terrorism, the wars, healthcare and the economy--was "ethics and corruption";

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9 WHEREAS polling shows that 80% of Democrats, 78% of Independents and 65% of Republicans support public funding of federal elections, as do all demographic and geographic subgroups;

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11 WHEREAS polling also shows that voters believe that, under public financing, candidates will win office based on their ideas not the money they raise, that politicians will be more accountable to the voters instead of large contributors, and that the special interests will receive fewer favors, tax breaks and legislative concessions;

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13 WHEREAS the Fair Elections Now Act is modeled after successful systems in Maine and Arizona that have provided an alternative to the "pay to play" system for a number of political cycles and which have withstood constitutional challenges;

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15 WHEREAS public financing in some form is used in virtually every other democracy on the planet;

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17 WHEREAS the average cost of a winning Senate campaign is expected to exceed \$8 million in 2010 and that of a House campaign nearly \$1.5 million;

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19 WHEREAS the percentage of total contributions coming from small donors (\$200 or less) in Congressional races has dwindled in each election cycle this past decade and hit an all-time low of 11% in 2008;

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21 WHEREAS the first election year cost of The Fair Elections Now Act is estimated at less than \$1 billion;

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23 WHEREAS Senator Maria Cantwell and more than half of the House Democratic caucus are co-sponsors of The Fair Elections Now Act;

24 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Whatcom County Democratic Party supports The Fair Elections Now Act, commends Senator Maria Cantwell for co-sponsoring it and urges Senator Patty Murray and Rep. Rick Larsen to co-sponsor it.

Resolution Passed by Whatcom County Democrats on 5-20-10