

New Resolution Would Give People a Voice on Overturning Citizens United Decision

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Legislators hope to stem the growth of Super PACs and dark money groups and the resulting overkill of TV ads, mail and robocalls.

MADISON - Speaking at a press conference today, State Senator **Dave Hansen** (D-Green Bay) and Representative

Lisa Subeck

(D-Madison) announced that they are introducing a resolution to allow the people of Wisconsin to weigh in on a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would overturn the infamous Citizens United decision.

In that decision the U.S. Supreme Court in effect ruled that corporations had the same rights as people and that money constitutes speech.

The Citizens United decision opened the floodgates for the rich and corporations to unfairly and secretly tilt the scales in their favor by making it possible for them to pour unlimited amounts of money into elections. Since the Supreme Court made its decision in 2010 the gap between the rich and poor and the rising power of corporations have continued to grow un-checked. So has the amount of money pouring into state campaigns



“To say corporations are people and that money equals speech is absurd,” said Hansen. “It turns the whole notion of democracy on its head. Corporations and the rich should not have more rights and more influence than the rest of us. That’s not how democracy is supposed to work.”

“We’ve seen the impact of that decision in a very short time with the creation of Super PACs and dark money groups and the resulting overkill of TV ads, mail and robocalls, most of which

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offer nothing of value for the voters other than to attack the opponents of whichever candidates they support," Hansen continued.

Just five years after the decision outside spending on campaigns doubled and outside spending in key races outpaced money that candidates spent on their own campaigns.

Hansen and Subeck feel it's time to level the playing field and give every citizen an equal voice in our elections. The voice of the mother working for minimum wage, or the retired factory worker, or the college student worried about repaying their student loans should not be drown out by those who seek to pay them less, cut their Social Security or profit from their student debt.

"The people of Wisconsin should have their say on whether or not they want to overturn Citizens United and restore a level playing field for voters in our democracy, concludes Hansen. "Our resolution will give them a chance to have their voices heard."

Legislative writer Jay Wadd contributed this story.