

Questions for the Grassroots Solutions to Corporate Power 2016 Workshops Corporations, Democracy, & The Rise Of Grassroots Popular Power: Money in Democracy

1. What are the electoral impacts of the overwhelming percentage of campaign finance money coming from corporate contributions?

Politicians (policymakers) favorable to corporate interests
Candidates chosen through the wealth primary
Bully Pulpit

2. Which industry is the biggest contributor?

FIRE, Finance, Insurance Real Estate
Money machine — Like the water Company

3. Why

They create money and can siphon some off as they send it into the economy

4. What is the wealth primary?

Media and Money long before the primaries

5. What are the two similarities between the elections of 1980 and 2010?

History of Campaign Finance 1896 to 1980
End of the spoils system
 Institutionalization of Civil Service
 Mark Hanna, McKinley & the Populists
 Teddy Roosevelt and First campaign finance laws
1976-80 Powell on the Court
 Buckley v Valeo – Money as speech - 1976
 Bellotti decision – corps have free speech rights 1978
2010 Citizens United
 Understand what Citizens United was?

6. Are corporate campaign contributions corrupt?

Quid Pro Quo
Deliberative Democracy

7. Is Free Speech the same as equal speech?

Kurt Hoehstein article

8. How does the ability of corporations to fund political campaigns impact the lives of our politicians?

Spend a huge amount of their time raising \$

Elizabeth Drew – Leads to politicians that are exhausted can't think clearly, do not think about the broad questions, who do not lead

9 What has been the impact of Citizens United on corporate campaign giving?

- 2012 election cycle, all super PACs together had raised about \$26 million by June 30 of the year before the vote;
- presidential super PACs were responsible for about \$15.6 million.
- This time, the total comes to more than \$258 million at the same point in time for presidential super PACs alone.
- double the more than \$130 million the presidential campaigns raised in the first six months of this year, setting up a new paradigm for campaign finance at the federal level.

Articles & charts

10. How has Citizens United brought various pro-democracy groups together?

Move To Amend, Free Speech for the People, Lawrence Lessig

11. How important is transparency in ending corporate influence of our elections?

Sunlight foundation

Hackfests

12. How does corporate money impact our local elections?

Research local examples

13. What is the Institute for Responsive Politics & Opensecrets.org?

First & best trackers of Money in Politics

Have a news letter

14 Who was Granny D?

90 yr old grandma who walked across country

15. What initiatives have been suggested to end corporate financing of our elections?

MTA

Publicly financed elections

16. Will publicly financed elections be part of the solution and what is the status of publicly-financed elections today?

Money as speech makes impossible

Voluntary Clean Money campaigns, CA Clean Money-only transparency

Been swamped by CU

Pushed back by SCOTUS

17. How does Move to Amend help solve the problem of corporate money in our elections?

Denies Corporate Personhood and Corporate Free Speech rights
History of Corporate Personhood

18. How functional is the Federal Elections Commission?

Split between Dems & Republicans
Can not make a decision

19. Is instant runoff voting a corporate issue?

Will allow the growth of a third party
Will better reflect the will of the people

20. What is the corporate connection to election integrity?

Who owns the machines
Who writes the software
Politico Story Voting machines
Black Box Voting

21. Are Independent campaigns truly independent

Elizabeth Drew quote of Lyn Nofziger
Communicating through Congressional Campaign committees
Or straight from the chair of the campaign committee

22. What other approaches are out there to upend Citizens United and change campaign financing?

MTA, Free Speech for the People, Anti Corruption Act