



Reframing the Conversation on Transparency in Election Spending

Why is transparency in election spending important?

We need real transparency about who is spending big money on elections to help all Americans/working families. Unlimited, secret money from wealthy special interests prevents us from making progress on key issues (INSERT YOUR ISSUE).

Who is doing all of this “secret spending” we hear so much about, and what does it really mean?

In recent election cycles, wealthy special interests spent over \$1 billion in secret money to support candidates. Voters will never know where that money came from, who was trying to influence their vote or who was trying to influence a candidate, because those organizations are not required to follow the transparency laws created to help keep voters informed, hold elected officials accountable and stop corruption.

How do disclosure laws support the goals of the First Amendment?

One of the main goals of the First Amendment is to ensure that elected leaders are responsive to voters and that there is a free flow of information to voters to preserve the integrity of our democracy. As voters, we have a right to know which wealthy special interests are spending big money to influence our vote and government so we can make informed decisions.

The U.S. Supreme Court has also held that disclosure advances the public's First Amendment right to information.

What about the right to anonymous speech?

Wealthy special interests often run election ads that are deliberately misleading, with no information on who paid for the ads. Voters need to know who is funding these ads so they can weigh their credibility and cast an informed vote.

For example, "protect the environment" ads from a conservationist group and major oil company may appear to have similar messaging when, in reality, the two organizations are seeking drastically different outcomes on the same issue.
