

May 16, 2012

Dear Senator,

The undersigned organizations support S. 2219, the DISCLOSE Act 2012, sponsored by Senator Sheldon Whitehouse.

The legislation would provide the public with basic information about campaign expenditures made by outside groups that are influencing federal elections and the donors financing these expenditures. The legislation would also provide timely disclosure by Super PACs and require outside groups which make campaign expenditures to take responsibility for their campaign ads.

It is a cardinal rule of campaign finance laws that citizens are entitled to know the identities of the donors financing campaign expenditures to influence their votes, and the amounts they gave. This basic right to know has long been recognized by disclosure laws enacted by Congress and by Supreme Court decisions upholding the constitutionality of these laws.

In the *Citizens United* decision, the Supreme Court by an 8 to 1 vote upheld the constitutionality of disclosure requirements for outside groups making campaign expenditures. The Court stated:

The First Amendment protects political speech; and disclosure permits citizens and shareholders to react to the speech of corporate entities in a proper way. This transparency enables the electorate to make informed decisions and give proper weight to different speakers and messages.

Polls show citizens strongly support disclosure by outside spenders.

The DISCLOSE Act of 2012 only contains disclosure requirements and does not contain special exceptions for any groups. The legislation is effective, fair and constitutional and deserves the support of Senators. Congress should enact the bill and provide citizens with the information they are entitled to know about who is giving and spending money to influence their votes.

We urge you to vote for S. 2219 and to take all steps necessary for its enactment.

Alliance for a Just Society
Americans for Campaign Reform
Brennan Center for Justice
Campaign Legal Center
Center for Media and Democracy
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington
Citizen Works
Coalition for Accountability in Political Spending
Coffee Party USA
Common Cause
Corporate Ethics International/ Business Ethics Network
Credo Action Network

Democracy 21
Democracy for America
Dēmos
Free Speech for People
Greenpeace
Harrington Investments, Inc.
Heartland Democracy
League of Women Voters
Main Street Alliance
MapLight
Michigan Campaign Finance Network
National People's Action
New Progressive Alliance
NC Center for Voter Education
Ohio Citizen's Action Money & Politics Project
People For the American Way
Public Citizen
Sunlight Foundation
Trillium Asset Management, LLC
Union of Concerned Scientists
United Republic
Walden Asset Management, a division of Boston Trust & Investment Management
WV Citizen Action Group
Wisconsin Democracy Campaign
Wolf-PAC
Zevin Asset Management, LLC