



Letter: Campaign funds shouldn't buy policy

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There is a problem in this country that needs to be addressed: the connection between money and politics.

Members of Congress spend much of their time raising money for their re-election campaigns. Because Washington lobbyists can easily access funds, lawmakers turn to them for help. Over time they become dependent on them and the corporations they represent. The laws that are enacted reflect the interests of those corporations, rather than the concerns of constituents.

Congress loosened the regulation of banks at precisely the time campaigns became more and more reliant on contributions from those corporations. And we all know what followed: the near-collapse of our banking system in the late 1990s. Congress eased up on regulating the banking industry right when it needed it most, because they did not want to upset their financial backers.

After the bank bailouts there was talk in Washington that banks should not be permitted ever again to become "too large to fail." However when limitations and restrictions were proposed, nothing passed. Intense lobbying by the banks brought an end to that. Both parties are to blame here; in fact, President Obama talked about tightening up banking regulations, but then folded under pressure from the same corporations to which he has been turning for funding his own re-election campaign.

We desperately need to separate campaign money from political decisions. We cannot allow our country to be governed any longer by the best Congress that money can buy.

Cushman D. Anthony
Falmouth