

# Portland Press Herald

## **Letters to the editor, Feb. 9, 2012 Nation must separate money, politics**

I was glad to read that Congress is attempting to improve its atrocious public approval ratings. Tightening up insider trading rules will help.

The real source of the disapproval goes deeper than that, however. People recognize that members of Congress no longer reflect the views of their constituents. Instead, the votes they cast are based on the views of the big corporations that pay for their re-election campaigns.

The situation was made even worse by the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision, which gave corporations the same rights as people to spend unlimited sums of money to influence elections. The current Republican primary battle offers clear evidence of how badly that distorts the election process.

We desperately need campaign finance reform on the national level to separate money from politics. The bipartisan Fair Elections Now Act would create a system for congressional candidates based on Maine's Clean Elections process. Even our own Sens. Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins declined to co-sponsor that, however, and no other legislative solutions are on the horizon.

We need the Supreme Court to change its approach to campaign spending, or else a Constitutional Convention to adjust the wording of the First Amendment.

It is time for all of us to advocate for campaign finance reform at the national level. We cannot allow our country to be governed any longer by "the best Congress that money can buy."

*Cushman D. Anthony*

*Falmouth*