

# Portland Press Herald

November 28, 2012  
Letters to the Editor

## Citizens United silences those without deep pockets

I was happy to see your article "[Political spending triggers backlash for Mainers](#)" (Nov. 13).

As a green-card holder, I have the right to live in the U.S. indefinitely, but I do not have the right to vote in elections. I was an Election Day volunteer for Maine Citizens for Clean Elections, in part because I am dismayed at the influence of money in our elections, but also in part because I wanted a way to participate in the political process.

Oddly enough, another way I may participate is by contributing to a campaign – this is legal for green-card holders.

Thanks to the U.S. Supreme Court's Citizens United decision, it's also legal for "noncitizen" entities like corporations and other special interests to spend unlimited amounts of money influencing elections – and this money dominated the most recent election cycle, here in Maine and around the country.

Some people argue that we cannot restrict spending because this is akin to restricting speech. But if it costs enormous amounts of money in order to have your message heard by the electorate, surely this is also restricting speech – that of those who do not have access to such funds. Is that outcome not worse for our democracy than placing limits on spending?

I spoke to hundreds of voters on Election Day who share my dismay, and Mainers have called for a movement to amend the U.S. Constitution and reverse Citizens United.

I call on the Maine Legislature to take action on behalf of the more than 10,000 citizens who signed a postcard in favor of a constitutional amendment. It's time to return to government "of, by, and for the people" – not "for the highest bidder, regardless of citizenship status."

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