

Sun Journal

[K. Simpson: 'Citizens United' decision affects us](#)

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Think the flood of big money into elections by the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision doesn't affect you?

Think again.

The aim of most of those expenditures (those that really are independent) is to promote candidates favorable to externalizing business costs — especially for giant corporations (deregulation) and lowering taxes for the financial sector, corporations, or the very wealthy.

As those goals are realized, federal and state costs rise and revenues shrink. Government then must either neglect its mandated duty, or shift costs and activities downward to the local level.

Both are happening and accelerating.

At the local level the financial burden is on property taxpayers, whose ability to pay is not always reflected in property valuations. The resulting duplication of effort, disparity in resources and the sheer inability to raise more revenue through the property tax makes city and town efforts to serve their communities a much more difficult burden. If that isn't city or town business, what is?

Lobbying also aggravates the problem, but can be corrected legislatively. The Supreme Court's interpretations declare that corporations are persons with full political rights, and money is speech and cannot be restricted. Only a constitutional amendment can fix this.

The Auburn City Council will soon decide whether it will consider a resolution asking the state Legislature to support a constitutional amendment to overturn that decision and let the state manage its elections as it sees fit. The public has a chance to speak on this at Council meetings on Dec. 3 and 17.

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