



CHAMBER SUPPORT OF RESOLUTION

Proposed Resolution by Pennsylvania General Assembly in support of a US Constitutional Amendment to address campaign finance laws

OUR POSITION: The **Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce** joins with other Pennsylvania Chambers of Commerce, organizations, citizens, and businesses in supporting a Resolution of the Pennsylvania General Assembly to call on Congress to pass a US Constitutional Amendment that would allow the states to regulate the spending of money to influence elections in the States and that Congress may regulate the spending of money to influence Federal Elections, and that in so doing the States and Congress may distinguish between natural persons and legally recognized entities such as corporations, foreign interests, and government authorities.

BACKGROUND: Since the late 2000s, the US Supreme Court has issued several decisions that created the opportunity for creating 501(c)(4) not-for-profit organizations to solicit funds outside of existing campaign laws for use in election campaigns. The rationale for these decisions equates free speech with free spending, regardless of the source, without disclosure or limitations. These 501(c)(4) organizations are allowed to receive unlimited contributions without accountability or a transparency requirement to publicly report these contributions or expenditures.

The amount of money being raised and spent by these organizations in US Senate races is now in the hundreds of millions of dollars on a state-by-state basis and billions of dollars on Presidential elections. This is rapidly changing the political campaign landscape, the tone and messages of campaigns, and the ability to understand who is really behind the offensive messaging and drowning local issues and local voices in elections. It negatively impacts the ability to have civil discourse in our democracy.

Since the Supreme Court rulings establish the effect of law, the remedy is to pass a US Constitutional Amendment that would empower the states, or when applicable, the federal government, to develop and pass campaign finance laws.

The national organization American Promise has been established to pursue this course of action by seeking resolutions of support from state legislatures for a US Constitutional Amendment. The Pennsylvania effort is known as For Our Freedom Pennsylvania (<https://forourfreedompa.com>). The goal is to make Pennsylvania the 23rd state to pass a resolution that would eventually lead to Congress passing the Constitutional Amendment, which could then be ratified by the states.

Approved by the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce Public Policy Committee – Wednesday, May 18, 2022