

Washington County Democratic Party
Declaration of the Platform and Resolutions Committee

A RESOLUTION TO ABOLISH CORPORATE PERSONHOOD

WHEREAS the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights protect the rights of individual human beings, also known as “natural persons”, and

WHEREAS the privileges conferred on corporations by state, federal, and local governments are neither inherent nor inalienable and do not equate with the rights of “natural persons”, and

WHEREAS free speech is a fundamental freedom and inalienable right and unlimited spending on elections is not free speech, and

WHEREAS money is not speech and, unlike speech, is commonly regulated for the benefit of commerce, and

WHEREAS the Constitution of the United States was drafted at a time when the concept of Corporation was limited to specific charters and the concept of ‘person’ was clearly intended to imply human individuals, and

WHEREAS the opinion of four dissenting Justices in the Citizens United vs. FEC ruling by the US Supreme Court noted that corporations have special advantages not enjoyed by natural persons such as limited liability, perpetual life, and special treatment of asset distributions, and

WHEREAS for-profit corporations are legally required to put profits for shareholders ahead of concerns of the broader public interest:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WASHINGTON COUNTY DEMOCRATS THAT:

1. We call on the State Attorney General and Oregon Legislature to take actions, including passing new legislation, to declare that Corporations and other legal organizations are not ‘natural persons’ under Oregon law;
2. We urge our Congressional delegation to sponsor and/or support initiatives, including Constitutional amendments, to reverse the effects of the Citizens United Supreme Court ruling;
3. We urge the judiciary to declare that spending money to influence elections is not free speech;
4. We call on all local governments within Washington County to adopt ordinances or resolutions declaring corporations and other legally similar entities are not ‘natural persons’; and
5. We urge the state to pass regulations that protect and define the rights and privileges of corporations and other legal organizations exclusive of ‘natural personhood’ as necessary to allow them to function effectively.