

July 16, 2018

The Honorable Pete Sessions  
Chairman  
House Committee on Rules  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable James McGovern  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Rules  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Sessions and Ranking Member McGovern:

The undersigned organizations urge you to rule in order Capuano amendment #35 to strike the language in section 628 of the House 2019 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill. The provision would limit the Securities and Exchange Commission's (SEC) ability to finalize, issue, or implement a rule requiring public companies to disclose political spending to shareholders.

Since the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United v. FEC* came down in 2010, corporations have been allowed to spend unlimited undisclosed amounts of money to influence American elections and in turn affect policy outcomes. Noting the danger of "dark money" for both American democracy and the shareholders of the companies that are spending in secret, a strong coalition of diverse allies has been working together since the decision to bring corporate spending in politics into the light.

We, the undersigned organizations, believe the SEC should be allowed to and encouraged to move forward with the rulemaking that would require public companies to disclose to their shareholders and the public how they spend money in politics. This information is material to investors- the constituency the SEC is responsible for protecting.

The Supreme Court's decision to give corporations the right under the First Amendment to spend unlimited funds from their corporate treasuries to support or attack candidates is troubling for several reasons, and investors concerned about the value of their investments and citizens concerned about the future of American democracy are looking to the SEC to take the action that so many investors have demanded and require disclosure of political spending.

Without direction from the SEC, there are no rules or procedures established in the United States to ensure that shareholders – those who actually own the wealth of corporations – are informed of, or have the right to approve, decisions on spending their money on politics. Investors want more disclosure in order to make sound investment decisions. That is why 1.2 million comments- the most in the agency's history- have come into the SEC on this rulemaking petition from diverse stakeholders including the founder of Vanguard, John Bogle, five state treasurers, a bi-partisan group of former SEC chairs and commissioners, and investment professionals representing \$690 billion in assets.

We believe that the rider blocking the SEC from making progress on this rulemaking was inappropriately included in the appropriations process and that the budget should be free of any poison pill policy riders. We urge you to rule in order the Capuano amendment #35 to strike section 628. We are grateful for your leadership and appreciate your consideration of this request to restore transparency and accountability to our democracy.

Sincerely,

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)  
Boston Common Asset Management  
Campaign for Accountability  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Center for Media and Democracy  
Citizen Works  
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW)  
Clean Yield Asset Management  
Common Cause  
Democracy 21  
Dominican Sisters of Hope  
End Citizens United  
Every Voice  
Franciscan Action Network  
Free Speech For People  
Government Accountability Project  
Green Century Capital Management  
Greenpeace  
Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility  
International Corporate Accountability Roundtable (ICAR)  
New Progressive Alliance  
OIP Trust  
People For the American Way  
Public Citizen  
Shareholder Association for Research & Education  
Trillium Asset Management, LLC  
Unitarian Universalist Association  
Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk, U.S. Province  
U.S. Public Interest Research Group  
Voices for Progress  
Wisconsin Democracy Campaign  
Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press  
Zevin Asset Management