



united re:public

DEMOCRACY IS NOT FOR SALE

A Bold New Challenge

TO THE UNDUE INFLUENCE

OF SPECIAL INTERESTS

OVER AMERICAN POLITICS

“The death-knell of the republic had rung as soon as the active power became lodged in the hands of those who sought, not to do justice to all citizens, rich and poor alike, but to stand for one special class and for its interests as opposed to the interests of others.”

THEODORE ROOSEVELT, 1903





THE PROBLEM:

Special interests will spend roughly \$4.5 billion funding campaigns and \$3.5 billion lobbying Congress in 2012.

Big-money special interests have achieved overwhelming control of politicians and policymaking. Both major political parties have been co-opted and corrupted by the system, and even principled politicians have no choice but to participate. Examinations of nearly every major issue and sector yield the same conclusion: Our government is no longer capable of rising to the daunting challenges facing America.

EVERY ISSUE: DEAD ON ARRIVAL

Philanthropists and leaders across the political spectrum are frustrated and weary from watching their issues lose ground to overpowering special interests. Many are eager to invest in democracy reform, but are seeking a robust effort that can leverage resources from a broad enough base to enable victory. Nearly everyone, it seems, is looking for a game-changing shift in strategy and scale.

PREACHING TO THE CHOIR

Lacking the money, strategy and scale to effectively take on the expanding lobbyist juggernaut, many public interest organizations develop sound policy proposals, but lack the ability to rally the reform community — much less the public — around a common agenda. They rarely penetrate mainstream audiences or reach beyond their own largely progressive borders. It is time to reach critical mass: 40% of Americans self-identify as conservative, 35% moderate and just 21% liberal.

8 in 10
OPPOSE
Citizens United

WASHINGTON POST/ABC NEWS POLL,
FEBRUARY 4-8, 2011



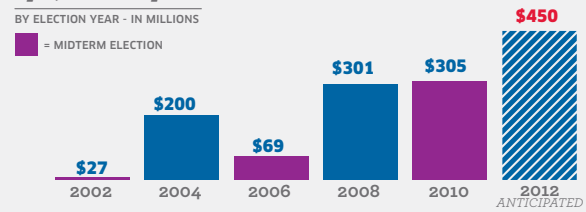
CITIZENS UNITED

The Supreme Court's 2010 *Citizens United* decision effectively legalized political bribery, creating the kind of concentration of power that our nation's founding fathers repeatedly warned against. 75% of Republicans, 81% of Independents and 84% of Democrats oppose the decision.

Independent Political Expenditures up 1,600% in past decade

BY ELECTION YEAR - IN MILLIONS

■ = MIDTERM ELECTION



SOURCE: OPENSECRETS.ORG

*“I see clearly that voters feel ever more estranged from government...
They see a nexus of money and power, greased by
special interests, lobbyists and large campaign donations.”*

POLLSTER STAN GREENBERG



THE SOLUTION:

Coalition building. Communications. Grantmaking. Advocacy. Accountability. More money.

OUR PLAN FOR REFORM



COMMUNICATIONS & INVESTIGATIONS

Drive the issue of undue influence into the center of the national debate, with a focus on connecting to kitchen-table concerns.

Spark scandals on a regular basis, rather than wait for them.

Identify and promote outside-the-Beltway “heroes of reform” who appeal to key demographic groups.

A CULTURE OF CONSEQUENCE

Unseat worst offenders from office.

Gain national attention and galvanize the political press around reform storylines.

Demonstrate that the issue has traction in an electoral context.

Connect money in politics to voters’ concerns — from Occupiers to conservatives to independents.

A BOLDER & BROADER COALITION

Convene by hosting the definitive flagship biennial reform conference.

Organize and maintain the definitive calendar of events and index of organizations.

Recruit the formal participation of public interest, consumer protection and small-business groups that routinely face special interest opposition.

DRAMATICALLY INCREASED FUNDING

Target grants vaand provide tools to spark innovation and promote best-of-breed organizations.

Strengthen the good work of existing groups and expand the number of organizations working for reform.

Collaborate to carefully avoid duplicative efforts and programs.

United Republic is a powerful national force that will convert the nation’s intensifying anger and cynicism into the kind of political heat that has historically provided the catalyst for real reform.

JOINING FORCES

Significant structural reforms are not possible until we create a massive popular movement that forces politicians to overhaul the system. We have taken the first steps toward harnessing a new wave of grassroots energy by merging with two powerful forces: Professor Lawrence Lessig’s Rootstrikers and MSNBC host Dylan Ratigan’s Get Money Out campaign. All told, we launch with an initial membership of nearly 300,000 — and the list is growing fast.

“We must assemble a broad, bipartisan movement to demand responsible stewardship of our public resources through fiscal & campaign finance reform. Our future really does depend on it.”

FORMER SENATOR ALAN SIMPSON (R-WY), 2011

A DRAMATIC SHIFT IN SCALE

We plan to get to scale quickly, and at a level far higher than any previous effort in this field. Our goal is to raise more than \$30 million over the next two years. We believe that this level of funding is the minimum needed to create a watershed movement.

We are launching with \$6 million in new investments from a bold new class of donors. We are rapidly expanding the table of donors and are looking for philanthropists, foundations and investors who understand that the issues they care about and have traditionally funded won’t break through unless we attack the money-in-politics problem first.

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VISION FOR A UNITED REPUBLIC

Where the will and concerns of
the people aren't drowned out by
the financial influence of the few;

Where politicians devote more time to their
constituents than to their fundraising;

Where political decisions are made on principle,
without the distorting effect
of big-money lobbyists;

Where individual citizens have access to clear
information about their leaders;


Where we are empowered to confront corruption in
our government.

*We believe this vision is achievable and
central to the success of the republic.*



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