

Political Bribery is Illegal!

United States Criminal Code: Title 18, Section 11, Subsection 201: Bribery of Public Officials:

“Whoever directly or indirectly, corruptly gives, offers, or promises anything of value to any public official... with intent to influence any official acts... or, being a public official, directly or indirectly, corruptly demands, seeks, receives, accepts, or agrees to receive or accept anything of value personally or for any other person or entity, in return for being influenced in the performance of any official act... shall be fined not more than three times the monetary equivalent of the thing of value, or imprisoned for not more than fifteen years, or both, and may be disqualified from holding any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States.”

Political bribery is how electoral campaigns are funded in the US. This “bribery of public officials” happens every day as big corporations, industry groups, SuperPACs and other deep-pocketed contributors write big checks to candidates and elected officials. These powerful people and institutions expect something in return—privileged access and influence—and they get it! This is not “one person, one vote” It is not “government of, by, and for the people.” **It is not democracy.**



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If we want a democracy, what should we do?

- End political bribery! Campaign to amend the US Constitution to overturn Citizens United and end corporate access to constitutional rights.
- Demand that laws against political bribery be taken seriously and enforced with vigor.
- Demand robust campaign spending and contribution disclosure, and hold our elected officials accountable when we find they are working for their funders instead of their constituents.
- End candidate dependency on private money. Support public funding for elections and free media for all candidates, including elected members of the judiciary.

If we eliminate political bribery, what could happen?

- We could demand action on global warming and support for green technologies and green jobs.
- We could establish tough banking and investment regulations to prevent financial meltdowns and to ensure that Main Street prospers, not just Wall Street.
- We could win a health care system that puts patient care before investor profits
- We could raise issues now currently ignored by both parties: poverty and lack of upward mobility, the need for affordable housing, the sorry state of education in schools that serve poor students or students of color.
- We could end tax breaks for companies that offshore good jobs and bring steady work at living wages home to the US
- We could insist that communities, not corporations, have the right to determine whether potentially damaging environmental or economic activities are appropriate for their towns. From the locations of big box stores to factory farms, state and federal regulations are written to benefit big donors, not our neighborhoods and the people who live there.

Join Alliance for Democracy!

We are a national non-partisan group dedicated to ending corporate influence on government, elections, media, and the environment. We seek to build participatory democracy at every level of government, and a sustainable and economically just society. Visit our website www.thealliancefordemocracy.org to learn more about political bribery, amending the constitution to eliminate corporate personhood, and local, state, and national work against corporate rule. Find educational resources, print and multimedia material, and contacts for local organizing.