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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to place reasonable limits on contributions to Super PACs which make independent expenditures, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to place reasonable limits on contributions to Super PACs which make independent expenditures, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Abolish Super PACs
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds as follows:

1 (1) Contribution limits to political action com-
2 mittees (PACs), including those that make inde-
3 pendent expenditures, help secure elections by lim-
4 iting both the risk of corruption and the risk that
5 significant contributions will create the appearance
6 of corruption.

7 (2) Since contribution limits on super PACs
8 were lifted in 2010, the number, influence, and
9 wealth of super PACs have exploded. Obtaining mil-
10 lions or billions of dollars in contributions to super
11 PACs is now critical to the success of Federal can-
12 didates' campaigns.

13 (3) As the influence of super PACs grows, so
14 does the likelihood that they will serve as a conduit
15 for corrupt agreements between contributor and can-
16 didate, whose communications are not subject to co-
17 ordination limitations.

18 (4) Between 2008 and 2020, the amount of
19 independent expenditures increased more than 700
20 percent, and in 2024, more than \$4.48 billion in
21 independent expenditures were spent on United
22 States elections. The money for these expenditures
23 largely came from contributions to 2,459 registered
24 super PACs.

1 (5) In 2012, the first modern elections for Fed-
2 eral office held without contribution limits to super
3 PACs, the top 1 percent of all individual super PAC
4 contributors contributed 76.76 percent of all indi-
5 vidual super PAC contributions, and that percentage
6 rose to 96.94 percent in 2024. Recent elections have
7 been influenced by individual contributors who gave
8 more than \$100 million to super PACs.

9 (6) As bribery laws have long recognized, un-
10 lawful quid pro quo exchanges can occur where the
11 bribe is funneled into a third party, such as a super
12 PAC. See, e.g., section 201 of title 18, United States
13 Code; *U.S. v. Menendez*, 291 F. Supp. 606, 621–23
14 (D. N.J. 2018). Law enforcement in several States
15 have prosecuted cases that involve bribes directed to
16 super PACs. However, bribery is notoriously difficult
17 to prosecute, and these laws do not adequately pro-
18 tect American voters from corruption.

19 (7) Without reasonable limitations on contribu-
20 tions, super PACs create an appearance of corrup-
21 tion. A bipartisan majority of Americans believe that
22 large super PAC contributions are made in exchange
23 for political favors, and that corruption is pervasive
24 in the Federal Government. This is, as the Supreme
25 Court recognized in *Buckley v. Valeo*, “disastrous” to

1 “confidence in the system of representative govern-
2 ment” 424 U.S. 1, 27 (1976).

3 (8) Placing limits on super PAC contributions
4 will also lessen the risk of foreign interference in
5 United States elections, making it more difficult for
6 foreign entities to funnel contributions to super
7 PACs via third-party contributors.

8 (9) *SpeechNow.org v. FEC*, 599 F.3d 686 (D.C.
9 Cir. 2010), the appellate court case that voided ex-
10 isting contribution limits to super PACs, wrongly
11 treated contributions as expenditures and wrongly
12 assumed that because uncoordinated independent ex-
13 penditures cannot give rise to quid pro quo corrup-
14 tion, that contributions to independent expenditure
15 committees similarly cannot give rise to corruption.
16 But they can and do.

17 (10) In the 14 years since *SpeechNow* unleashed
18 billions of dollars in unregulated contributions, super
19 PACs have obtained unprecedented wealth and value
20 to candidate campaigns and can facilitate vast, near-
21 ly untraceable corrupt transactions.

22 (11) Because Super PACs have become unique-
23 ly important to candidate campaigns and can accept
24 millions and even hundreds of millions of dollars
25 from single entities, candidates and contributors

1 have reason and opportunity to guide corrupt con-
2 tributions into super PACs, establishing a significant
3 risk of corruption and creating an appearance of
4 corruption that undermines the public's faith in
5 their representatives and our political system.

6 (12) Reasonable limits on contributions to
7 super PACs are lawful and necessary to protect
8 American democracy and American voters.

9 (b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this Act—

10 (1) to limit the risk of corrupt agreements be-
11 tween candidates and contributors by placing rea-
12 sonable limits on contributions to political action
13 committees that make independent expenditures;

14 (2) to limit the appearance of corruption cre-
15 ated by uncapped contributions to political action
16 committees that make independent expenditures;
17 and

18 (3) to restore the public's faith in our elections.

19 **SEC. 3. LIMITATION ON CONTRIBUTIONS TO INDEPENDENT**
20 **EXPENDITURE COMMITTEES.**

21 (a) LIMITATIONS.—Section 315(a)(1)(C) of the Fed-
22 eral Election Campaign Act of 1971 (52 U.S.C.
23 30116(a)(1)(C)) is amended by striking “to any other po-
24 litical committee” and inserting “to an independent ex-
25 penditure committee or any other political committee”.

1 (b) DEFINITION.—Section 301 of such Act (52
2 U.S.C. 30101) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
3 lowing:

4 “(27) INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE COM-
5 MITTEE.—

6 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘inde-
7 pendent expenditure committee’ means a polit-
8 ical committee which—

9 “(i) makes independent expenditures
10 aggregating \$5,000 or more during a cal-
11 endar year; or

12 “(ii) makes contributions to other
13 independent expenditure committees aggre-
14 gating \$5,000 more during a calendar
15 year.

16 “(B) TREATMENT OF SEPARATE AC-
17 COUNTS.—The term ‘independent expenditure
18 committee’ includes an account of a political
19 committee which is established for the purpose
20 of making independent expenditures or con-
21 tributions to other committees making inde-
22 pendent expenditures.”.

23 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
24 this section shall apply with respect to contributions and
25 independent expenditures made during the first calendar

- 1 year which begins after the date of the enactment of this
- 2 Act and each succeeding calendar year.