

ABOLISH SUPER PACS ACT

Representatives Summer L. Lee, Ro Khanna, James R. McGovern, and Pramila Jayapal

Our democracy should never be for sale, but right now, billionaires, corporations, and powerful special interests have an unlimited ability to flood our elections with money, drowning out the voices of everyday voters through the use of "independent expenditure-only" political action committees (PACs), commonly referred to as "super PACs."

In 2010, the Supreme Court's ruling in *Citizens United v. FEC* reshaped campaign finance by allowing corporations and other outside groups to spend unlimited money on elections, claiming such spending posed no risk of corruption as long as it was not coordinated with candidates (i.e., an "independent expenditure"). Shortly after, the federal appeals court extended this rationale in *SpeechNow.org v. FEC*, ruling that because the Supreme Court ruled in *Citizens United v. FEC* that independent expenditures did not pose a risk of corruption, then contributions to PACs that only make independent expenditures could not pose a risk of corruption either and should not be limited. This decision effectively created Super PACs as we know them today, unleashing unlimited money into our political system and tightening the grip of wealthy donors on our democracy.

The *SpeechNow.org v. FEC* decision was wrong in 2010, and fifteen years later, that fact has only become clearer: super PACs have eroded public trust, undermined democracy, and have become one of the main vehicles for the rich and powerful to exercise undue influence on our government and electoral process. This past election cycle was the most expensive election in history, with over \$2.6 billion spent by super PACs alone. Our broken campaign finance system makes it nearly impossible for working-class candidates to compete when running for office, while also resulting in many elected officials beholden to the special interests of their major donors, prioritizing corporate policies over the policies that would benefit their own constituents. Instead of progress on gun control, climate action, affordable housing, healthcare, and education, we have a corporate oligarchy that has bought the system and is committed to blocking the policies that would benefit everyday working people.

Our democracy should be driven by the people, not the wealthiest few. The **Abolish Super PACs Act** would put an end to the corrupting influence of money in politics by capping the contribution limit of individuals to super PACs at \$5,000, effectively abolishing them. This bill is a crucial step toward restoring democracy, combating corruption, and leveling the playing field to ensure a government that truly represents the people.

The **Abolish Super PACs Act** is endorsed by Common Defense, Court Accountability, Dream Defenders, End Citizens United, Equal Citizens, Free Speech For People, Gen-Z for Change, Grassroots Global Justice Action Fund, IfNotNow Movement, Jewish Voice for Peace Action, Justice is Global Action, Move to Amend, MPower Change Action Fund, National Iranian American Council Action, Our Revolution, Peace Action, RepresentUs, RootsAction, Rural Organizing, Sunrise Movement, US Campaign for Palestinian Rights Action, and Women's March.

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