



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

JUL 15 2014

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am allowing Senate Bill 1272 to become law without my signature.

This bill places an advisory question on the November ballot to ask voters if Congress should amend the United States Constitution to overturn *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*.

To be clear, this bill and the advisory vote it requires has no legal effect whatsoever. The only way to overturn a Supreme Court decision such as *Citizens United* is by the process outlined in Article V of the United States Constitution. In fact, the California State Legislature recently took action in this regard by approving a joint resolution calling upon Congress to convene a Constitutional convention for this very purpose.

I understand the motivation behind the enthusiastic support of this bill. In fact, I too believe that *Citizens United* was wrongly decided and grossly underestimated the corrupting influence of unchecked money on our democratic institutions.

But we should not make it a habit to clutter our ballots with nonbinding measures as citizens rightfully assume that their votes are meant to have legal effect. Nevertheless, given the Legislature's commitment on this issue, even to the point of calling for an unprecedented Article V Constitutional Convention, I am willing to allow this question to be placed before the voters.

By allowing SB 1272 to become law without my signature, it is my intention to signal that I am not inclined to repeat this practice of seeking advisory opinions from the voters. Also, I am announcing my action on this bill today so that this advisory question will be included in the principal ballot pamphlet, avoiding the significant costs of a supplemental pamphlet.

Sincerely,

  
Edmund G. Brown Jr.