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**Montana Initiative to File Bold Blueprint to Challenge *Citizens United*;
New Amendment Would Use Corporate Law to Ban Political Spending**

HELENA, Montana – The Transparent Election Initiative, a Montana organization, today released the public draft of a historic constitutional amendment that takes direct aim at *Citizens United*—and the corporate and dark money it unleashed into Montana’s politics. The amendment will be officially filed with the Montana Secretary of State’s office on Friday, August 1.

The 1,000-word amendment takes an innovative new approach by using Montana’s corporate chartering authority to no longer grant its corporations and similar entities the power to use money to influence candidate campaigns or ballot measures. By redefining the powers granted to corporations under Montana law, the measure aims to undo the practical effects of *Citizens United* within the state.

“This is the first step in a process to place this amendment on the November 3, 2026 general election ballot,” said Jeff Mangan, former Commissioner of Political Practices and leader of the initiative effort. “Montana has a history of ensuring that citizens lead its elections, not corporations. With The Montana Plan, we continue that tradition.”

AMENDMENT DETAILS

The amendment’s legal structure, reviewed extensively by legal scholars and government leaders and crafted to withstand judicial scrutiny, uses a “reset and re-grant” framework that reaffirms only those powers necessary for legitimate business or charitable activity—explicitly excluding political spending.

Rather than regulating political conduct, *The Montana Plan* redefines corporate powers at their source. Mangan explained that corporations only have the powers the state gives them—and Montana is choosing not to give them the power to spend in politics. This principle applies equally to out-of-state corporations, which under Montana law may only exercise powers that

in-state corporations may exercise. As a result, Montana's politics would be free of all corporate electioneering—whether by in-state or out-of-state entities.

The measure would also eliminate “dark money” in Montana's politics by no longer granting political-spending power to 501(c)(4) nonprofit corporations. Political committees organized exclusively for electioneering would still be allowed, but only if they claim no special privileges other than limited liability.

Matthew Cochenour, a former assistant attorney general and acting solicitor general who represented the State of Montana in constitutional litigation for more than a decade, drafted and will file the proposed amendment for the Transparent Election Initiative.

NEXT STEPS

After the amendment is filed with the Montana Secretary of State's office on August 1, the next steps include review by the Montana Legislative Services Division for clarity and legal formatting, followed by submission to the Attorney General and Budget Director for sufficiency review this fall. If approved, signature gathering will begin in early 2026. Supporters must collect approximately 60,000 valid signatures, including representation from at least 40 of the state's legislative districts, to qualify the measure for the ballot.

MONTANA HISTORY IN ELECTION INTEGRITY

Montana has long led the way in standing up to corporate influence in elections. In 1912, voters passed the Corrupt Practices Act to rein in the Anaconda Copper Company's political dominance. Although *Citizens United* later invalidated that law, Montanans never accepted the outcome. In 2012, 75% of Montanans emphatically stated that corporations are not human beings with constitutional rights when we passed I-166. The Montana Plan honors that legacy while offering a legally durable solution grounded in state authority.

“This is not about limiting speech—it's about defining what powers corporations get in the first place,” Mangan said. “Montana will show the country that one state can make a difference.”

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RESOURCES

The Montana Plan was first unveiled on June 18, 2025:

- [Video of the June 18 announcement](#)
- [Slide deck from the June 18 presentation](#)
- [Full press release from June 18 announcement](#), including Q&As and publication-ready quotes from government leaders, advocacy organizations, and legal scholars
- [Timeline](#) of the Montana ballot-initiative process

YouTube videos:

- Undoing *Citizens United* with The Montana Plan ([horizontal](#) video | [vertical](#))
- [Why The Montana Plan Doesn't Violate Citizens United](#)

Full details available at the [Transparent Election Initiative website](#)