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## **LARSON CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM BILL GARNERS SUPPORT FROM MAJORITY OF HOUSE DEMOCRATS**

*Washington, DC* -- Congressman John B. Larson (*CT-01*), Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, announced today that his Fair Elections legislation, to take the hunt for big money out of politics, now has the support of the majority of House Democrats. Backing for the Fair Elections Now Act has grown in response to a Supreme Court decision earlier this year that opened the floodgates to corporate spending in political campaigns.

Congressman Larson said, **“Americans are sick and tired of wealthy special interests and big business influencing the outcome of elections, and the Supreme Court decision will only make matters worse. Fair Elections gives us the opportunity to turn back the tide of corporate interests and give all Americans an equal say in their government. Members of the House from both sides of the aisle are supporting the Fair Elections bill because it gives all of us an opportunity to spend more of our time tackling the issues the American people sent us here to deal with, rather than dialing for dollars.”**

The 134 co-sponsors of the Fair Elections Now Act represent a diverse range of House Democrats including 66 percent of new members, 62 percent of Democratic women and half of the Congressional Black Caucus. The bill also recently won the endorsement of the NAACP, the Center for American Progress, the SEIU, 40 businesses and 200 religious leaders.

**“The country needs both parties to work to solve the political crisis created by the**

**Supreme Court's decision in Citizens United, and the bipartisan solution that has the broadest support within Congress is Fair Elections,"** said Nick Nyhart, president and CEO of Public Campaign. **"Not only is it the best policy response to the escalating cost to run for office, it will take candidates off the fundraising treadmill and encourage them to seek support from voters back home. This bill is democracy-in-action."**

The announcement today comes on the same day that Fair Elections activists are storming the Hill to deliver petitions and letters of support for the legislation.

Fair Elections would not raise the constitutional challenges that have been levied against the McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform law. It would offer candidates the choice of accessing public funds for their campaigns if they reach a certain threshold of support and forego big dollar fundraising in exchange for the sort of grassroots small donor efforts we saw Barack Obama use so successfully in his presidential campaign.

Here's how the Fair Elections Now Act would work:

- The program is completely voluntary – no candidate for Congress is compelled to use it.
- Candidates must raise a minimum level of small individual contributions to qualify for the program. Once they qualify, candidates will abide by various restrictions and disclosure requirements.
- Qualified candidates will receive an up-front grant, based on the average costs of winning campaigns in recent elections for their primary campaigns, and if nominated, another grant for their general election campaign.
- Candidates will also receive a match for contributions of \$100 or less from an individual; that match will stop after a certain spending level is reached, but candidates may continue to raise donations of up to \$100 per individual without a match.

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