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CONTACT: Emily Barocas/202-225-7295

LARSON EXPRESSES SUPPORT FOR NEW CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM IN WAKE OF MCCAIN-FEINGOLD SUPREME COURT CHALLENGE

Washington, DC -- Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01), Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, responded today to the arguments before the Supreme Court over the constitutionality on restrictions to political campaign contributions by corporations. Congressman Larson is the author of the Fair Elections Now Act (FENA), H.R. 1826, in the House of Representatives, legislation that would end the hunt for big dollar donations to political campaigns and allow Members of Congress to get back to doing the work the people sent them to Washington to do.

Larson, said, **“The hearing before the Supreme Court today is further evidence of how broken our campaign finance system is and how badly we need true reform. Today, Members of Congress are forced to spend too much time dialing for dollars. This distracting hunt for campaign contributions takes us away from the real reason we came to Washington – to do the people’s business.**

“That is why I authored the Fair Elections Now Act - comprehensive reform that would give candidates and Members of Congress alike an opportunity to concentrate on talking to constituents rather than donors and studying issues rather than call sheets. FENA would be exempt from the constitutional challenges that have been raised 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.

“By taking the special interests and corporations out of our electoral process we would put the American people back in charge. We heard that from experts at our hearing on FENA before the House Administration Committee and we’ve seen that example as states around the country have implemented their own Fair Elections systems. Today’s hearing at the Supreme Court reaffirms my support for the Fair Elections Now Act and I will continue to work to bring the bill for a vote on the floor of the House.”

Monica Youn, Counsel at New York University School of Law’s Brennan Center for Justice said, “FENA doesn’t contain any features that courts have found to raise constitutional issues. Instead, the Supreme Court and other courts have consistently upheld the constitutionality of public financing systems, such as FENA.”

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