

CORPORATE PERSONHOOD AND MONEY IN POLITICS

WHEREAS, on January 21, 2010 in their ruling of Citizens United vs. the Federal Elections Commission, the United States Supreme Court decided to allow corporations and unions to spend unlimited amounts of money to elect or defeat federal candidates; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court based its decision on the premise that First Amendment free speech rights afforded to natural persons also apply to corporations, but the dissenting opinion stated, "... the Court's opinion is thus a rejection of the common sense of the American people ... who have fought against the distinctive corrupting potential of corporate electioneering since the days of Theodore Roosevelt;" and

WHEREAS, corporations will likely spend a great deal more than unions in the future, having outspent them four to one in the 2008 election cycle, thus giving an unfair advantage to candidates who favor big business rather than the public good;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc., at its 2010 Annual Convention on September 25th, asks the United States Congress to pass legislation such as the DISCLOSE Spending in Elections Act (H.R.5175; S.3295), the Fair Elections Now Act (H.R.1826; S.752), and the Shareholder Protection Act of 2010 (H.R.4790) to regulate corporate contributions to political candidates.

ETHICS VIOLATIONS OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

WHEREAS, wrongdoing of Florida public officials in recent years has resulted in many convictions and jail time, and federal and Florida laws are inadequate for ethics violations of elected and appointed government officials; and

WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court on June 24, 2010 ruled that the federal honest services fraud law covered only “bribery and kickback schemes” and not undisclosed interest, the hidden benefit that a public official may gain from a vote or action; and

WHEREAS, though the Florida Legislature in 2010 passed H 1301 (Identical S 1980), advocated by the Palm Beach County Commission and sponsored by Rep. Kevin Rader and Sen. Dave Aronberg, allowing counties to increase penalties for ethics and financial disclosure violations, two other bills, S 1076 and S 734, for more comprehensive statewide reform, requested by Palm Beach County State Attorney Michael McAuliffe and sponsored by Sen. Dan Gelber, did not pass;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic Women’s Club of Florida, Inc., at its 2010 Annual Convention on September 25th, urges the United States Congress to revise the federal honest services fraud law and the Florida Legislature to pass stronger anti-corruption legislation.

LIMITATIONS OF EXPENDITURES BY POLITICAL CLUBS

WHEREAS, all politics is local, electing a representative government should be the result of grassroots activism, and individual involvement as a member of a political club encourages active participation in the electoral process; and

WHEREAS, requiring political clubs to establish a state Political Action Committee (PAC) or Committee of Continuing Existence (CCE) in order to contribute more than an annual aggregate total of \$500 to all local and state candidates and for political activity discourages the involvement of individuals in local government and is a hindrance when several local candidates are in need of support;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc., at its 2010 Annual Convention on September 25th, asks the Florida Legislature to revise state election laws so that each political club that is part of an entity registered as a corporation by the state may support any number of state and local candidates to the full extent of the amount allowed by law of \$500 per candidate for each election cycle, and spend \$500 each year for political activity.

OFFSHORE DRILLING BAN FOR FLORIDA

WHEREAS, Florida's clear clean waters, world-class beaches and coral reefs provide a living for its citizens and contain marine life and a pollution-free environment for a vibrant ecology; and

WHEREAS, the Florida coasts draw millions of visitors each year, supporting a tourism industry which generates over \$65 billion to Florida's economy and its subsequent sales tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, because oil prices are determined on the international market, any impact that offshore drilling in Florida waters might have on the wellhead prices is insignificant; and any oil spill event in the Gulf of Mexico would cause harm to Florida's quality of life and its economy and could bring irreversible ecological damage to the state; and

WHEREAS, oil spill events emanating from allowing offshore oil drilling in Florida's waters have significantly harmed Florida's pristine waters, world-class beaches, coral reefs, negatively impacting industry and State revenue;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc., at its 2010 Annual Convention on September 25th, opposes all oil drilling off the coast of Florida now or in the future.

OPPOSE ARIZONA COPY-CAT IMMIGRATION LAW IN FLORIDA

Whereas, immigration enforcement is under the jurisdiction of United States federal law;
and

Whereas, Arizona's immigration law (SB 1070, signed by its governor on April 23, 2010) makes illegal immigration a state crime, requires that immigrants carry proof of legal status, and allows local and state police to check the status of anyone whom they have stopped; and

Whereas, according to the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center, immigrant workers and entrepreneurs are critical to Florida's economy, tax base and talent pool, and contribute \$20 billion a year in federal, state and local taxes;

Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc. (DWCF), at its 2010 Convention on September 25th, opposes any Arizona copy-cat immigration law in Florida; and

Therefore, Be It Further Resolved, that DWCF urges that Congress pass fair and reasonable immigration reform, especially the DREAM Act (H.R.1751; H.R.4920; S.729; S.3827), providing a path to citizenship for undocumented young people who were brought into this country by their parents as infants or children.

OPPOSE EFFORTS TO NULLIFY HEALTH CARE REFORM

Whereas, The Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act, also known as “The Health Care Reform Law” was signed into federal law on March 23, 2010; and

Whereas, an estimated forty million Americans are underinsured or uninsured; and

Whereas, the Attorneys General of twenty states including Florida have filed lawsuits, without the support of the citizenry, to oppose implementation of the law, or parts of it; and

Whereas, as the increasing cost of health care now exceeds 2.3 trillion dollars each year, federalism (sharing of power between federal and state government) is the appropriate avenue to control spiraling health care costs;

Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Democratic Women’s Club of Florida, Inc., at its 2010 Convention on September 25th, supports health care reform and opposes all efforts by Florida’s Attorney General and lawmakers to nullify any part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act of 2010.

RATIFY THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

WHEREAS, only a federal Equal Rights Amendment can provide United States citizens with the highest and broadest level of legal protection against sex discrimination; and

WHEREAS, without the Equal Rights Amendment added to the Constitution, the statutes and case law that have produced major advances in women's rights since the middle of the last century are vulnerable to being weakened, ignored or reversed; and

WHEREAS, the Equal Rights Amendment is needed to improve the standing of the United States globally with respect to equal justice under the law;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc., at its 2010 Convention on September 25th, urges the Florida Legislature to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, thus advancing Florida's commitment to equal justice without regard to sex.