

March 14, 2017

**Senate Judiciary Committee Must Focus on  
Judge Gorsuch's Troubling Money-in-Politics Record**

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
317 Senate Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Senate Minority Leader  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Grassley  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
152 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Chairman Grassley, and Ranking Member Feinstein:

As organizations representing tens of millions of Americans, we write to express our deep concern regarding the nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States because of his troubling record on money in politics.

Americans across the country are concerned about the growing influence of big money in our elections and our government.

Last year, the cost of running for federal office rose yet again, with more money than ever coming from a small group of elite donors, and a substantial amount of secret money in the system. The constant pursuit of campaign money from a relative handful of wealthy contributors skews policy outcomes and has shaken confidence in our political process. Eighty-five percent of voters say we should “fundamentally change” or “completely rebuild” the current campaign money system.<sup>1</sup>

The Supreme Court has been a key source of the problem by outlawing common sense limits on big money spending, most famously in the *Citizens United* decision. The challenge to our democracy is not simply the influence gained by billionaires and powerful corporations but, more deeply, it is the loss of an effective voice for the vast majority of Americans and of public confidence by ordinary Americans in their government and federal officeholders.

The next justice confirmed to lifetime tenure on the Court will likely be a tie-breaking vote in new cases addressing political money. In future decisions, the Court might erase our few remaining protections against big money influence in campaigns and policy-making, or permit a balanced political system in which all voices are heard and currently marginalized communities have a full say in the decisions that affect their lives.

Americans understand this, and 93 percent of voters think it's important that President Trump nominates a Supreme Court justice who is open to limiting the influence of big money in politics.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, Judge Gorsuch's record on money in politics and corporate power is

deeply troubling, and suggests he would support increasing the power of the wealthiest interests within the system.<sup>3</sup>

As the Senate Judiciary Committee considers whether Judge Gorsuch is fit to serve all Americans as a Supreme Court Justice, we ask that you vigorously pursue this essential question:

*Will Judge Gorsuch's legal philosophy lead him to strike down even more protections against the use of corporate or personal wealth to influence elections, such as candidate and party contribution limits, or will he permit sensible limits on political money in order to ensure the voices and will of all Americans are fully represented within the political process?*

Our country's democracy is at stake in the answer to this key question. The seat Judge Gorsuch seeks does not belong to President Trump, Republicans, Democrats, liberals, or conservatives. It belongs to the American people. As Senators it is your duty to ensure that the next member of the Supreme Court holds dear the belief that the Constitution protects all of us, not just the wealthy and the powerful. Any nominee who does not meet this standard must not occupy a lifetime seat on the nation's highest court.

In support of our shared democracy,

99Rise

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AFSCME

Alliance for Citizenship

Alliance for Democracy

American Atheists

American Federation of Teachers

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

Americans for Democratic Action

American Postal Workers Union

Americans Against Trump

Arab American Institute

Asian Americans Advancing Justice

Association of Flight Attendants

Berkshire Environmental Action Team

Beyond Nuclear

Brave New Films

California Clean Money Campaign

Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good

Center for American Progress

Center for Emergent Diplomacy

Center for Media and Democracy

Center for Popular Democracy

Center for Science in the Public Interest

Church Women United in New York State

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW)

Class Action

Clean Elections Texas

Coalition for Disability Health Equity

Coalition to Restore Democracy  
CODEPINK  
Coffee Party Savannah  
Common Cause  
Concerned Citizens for Change  
Conscious Elders Network  
Communications Workers of America  
DC Emergent Diplomacy  
DC Environmental Network  
DC Latino Caucus  
Democracy 21  
Democracy Initiative  
Democracy Matters  
Democracy Spring  
Demos  
Don't Waste Michigan  
End Citizens United  
Endangered Species Coalition  
Energy Action Coalition  
EPI Policy Center  
Every Voice  
Fix Democracy First!  
Free Speech For People  
Friends of the Earth  
Gender Justice Institute  
Genius Hiphop  
Get Money Out - Maryland  
Greenpeace USA  
Hightower Lowdown  
Indivisible  
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy  
International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement  
Workers of America, UAW  
Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement  
Jobs with Justice  
Just Foreign Policy  
Labor Campaign for Single Payer Healthcare  
Latino Victory Project  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
League of Conservation Voters  
League of United Latin American Citizens  
Main Street Alliance  
MapLight  
MAYDAY America  
Mi Familia Vota  
Missouri Jobs With Justice Voter Action  
National Association of Social Workers  
NAACP  
National Black Justice Coalition  
National Center for Lesbian Rights

National Council of Jewish Women  
National Education Association  
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund  
National Organization for Women  
National Partnership for Women and Families  
National Priorities Project  
New Florida Majority  
New Progressive Alliance  
Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance  
Occupy.com  
Occupy Bergen County  
OLE - Organizers in the Land of Enchantment  
Organize Florida  
Other 98% Action  
Our Revolution  
Pachamama Alliance  
Participatory Politics Foundation  
Patriotic Millionaires  
People Demanding Action  
People for the American Way  
PeopleNOW.org  
People's Action  
Power Shift Network  
Pride at Work  
Represent.US  
ReThink Media  
Reverb Press  
RootsAction.org  
SEIU  
Sierra Club  
Sierra Student Coalition  
Small Planet Institute  
Stamp Stampede  
Student Debt Crisis  
TakeAction Minnesota  
The Rootstrikers Project of Demand Progress  
The Workmen's Circle  
Union For Reform Judaism  
Voices for Progress  
Voto Latino  
West Virginia Citizen Action Group  
Wisconsin Democracy Campaign  
Working Families Party

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<sup>1</sup> Nicholas Confessore and Megan Three-Brennan, [“Poll Shows Americans Favor an Overhaul of Campaign Financing.”](#) THE NEW YORK TIMES (June 2, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> [“The Supreme Court and Money in Politics: Survey Topline Findings,”](#) HATTAWAY COMMUNICATIONS (January 2017).

<sup>3</sup> [“Judge Gorsuch’s Extreme Views Could Undermine Urgently Needed Money in Politics Reforms,”](#) DEMOS & CAMPAIGN LEGAL CENTER (January 31, 2017).