

Petition to Increase People Power and Decrease Corporate Power **Statewide Referendum Petition Drive to Repeal Senate Bill/House Bill 1**

Talking Points

√ The bill was passed by a lame duck session of the Ohio General Assembly in an emergency “Special Session” just before the Christmas/Holiday break without adequate notice or opportunity for the public and media to thoroughly understand its contents and impact.

√ For the first time in nearly a century, the bill legalizes direct contributions from business corporations to certain political activities, including pro-corporate political advertisements.

- Corporations already possess political powers and rights to be heard by public officials, to shape legislation, and to influence elections. Why do they need more power and rights?
- The rights, powers, and voices of citizens without money (working people, people without adequate health care, the poor) are already politically weak. How does increasing the rights and powers of corporations politically help these citizens?
- Corporations were never intended by Ohio’s founders to have political rights. For decades after statehood, corporations were closely controlled and rigidly defined by “we the people” through laws, constitutions, and court cases. In 1908, the Ohio General Assembly passed legislation “to prevent the corruption of elections and political parties by corporations” by barring any corporation from directly or indirectly giving any money or property to any political organization, party or candidate.

√ The original bill’s intent (14 pages) was to expand disclosure of political contributions – and this is needed. However, the final bill (139 pages) contained many anti-democratic provisions.

√ The bill increases contribution limits 400% from \$2500 to \$10,000 for wealthy individuals and business corporations, increasing their ability to buy elections.

√ The disclosure provisions of this bill could have been passed on their own. Coupling them with the legalization of direct corporate contributions for political purposes is an assault on what’s left of democracy in Ohio.

**For more information on this law, go to www.AFSC.net or contact:
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