

# THE PROBLEM OF FOREIGN MONEY IN POLITICS

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AMERICAN PROMISE

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## INTRODUCTION

Americans fear for the future of our democracy. Criminal crypto-billionaires, shadowy SuperPACs, global corporations, big unions, and the monied upper crust that politicians call the “donor class” spend billions of dollars every election cycle. These wealthy players push divisive, negative attacks, sow confusion, and drown out the voices of the voters. While these negative ads are effective at getting attention and tearing down their opposition,<sup>1</sup> they distract from state and local problems in favor of broad national influence campaigns. As a result, 86% of Americans feel our democracy is endangered, citing the influence of money in politics as *the* major threat.<sup>2</sup>

What many Americans don’t realize, however, is that there is another dangerous aspect to this problem – that foreign money flows into our political system in ways that are perfectly legal under our current laws. Although federal law nominally prohibits foreign governments, foreign nationals, and foreign corporations from spending money in our elections,<sup>3</sup> our broken system of election spending makes it easy for foreign entities to spend millions of dollars to influence our elections anyway. Additionally, a loophole recently opened up by the FEC<sup>4</sup> allows foreign governments to legally and openly spend unlimited amounts of money in ballot initiative elections.

With the erosion of a reasonable constitutional framework for regulating election spending, the worst nightmares of the nation’s founders have become our 21st century reality.

America’s founders warned against the dangers of foreign influence in our politics even before the Constitution was ratified. The founders understood that our foreign adversaries would seek to infiltrate our politics and undermine our national unity because a weakened and divided America would be easier to defeat in battle and trade. As John Jay put it in Federalist No. 5: “[W]eakness and divisions at home would invite dangers from abroad; and nothing would tend more to secure us from them than union, strength, and good government within ourselves.”<sup>5</sup>

Foreign countries, foreign nationals, and foreign corporations often have interests that diverge from those of the American people, and **allowing them to influence our elections makes it possible for them to direct our politics in a way that is beneficial to them but harmful to us.** Though we have long-standing laws and traditions that seek to prevent foreign influence in the most obvious and direct ways, our current campaign finance system of [dark money](#) and unlimited expenditures has created new vulnerabilities for foreign money and influence to exploit.

## BY THE NUMBERS

# RECENT ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE PROBLEM OF FOREIGN MONEY IN OUR POLITICS:

**OVER  
\$67 MILLION SPENT BY  
FOREIGN ENTITIES IN JUST  
ONE BALLOT ELECTION IN  
MAINE IN 2021<sup>6</sup>**

A subsidiary of Hydro Quebec, the government-owned provincial energy utility of Quebec<sup>7</sup>, spent over **\$22 MILLION** on efforts to defeat the ballot measure.<sup>8</sup> Subsidiaries of Iberdrola, S.A., a Spanish power company, spent an additional **\$42 MILLION** to defeat the measure.<sup>9</sup>

**OVER  
\$19.9 MILLION SPENT IN  
2022 FEDERAL ELECTIONS  
BY PACS CONNECTED TO  
FOREIGN COMPANIES<sup>10</sup>**

Subsidiaries of foreign companies are able to spend **MILLIONS** of dollars through corporate PACs: in the 2022 elections alone, PACs connected to foreign companies spent over **\$19.9 MILLION** on federal elections.

**SINCE 2021,  
MILLIONS MORE WERE SPENT  
BY FOREIGN-CONNECTED  
COMPANIES IN PREPARATION  
FOR ANOTHER CONTENTIOUS  
BALLOT ELECTION IN 2023<sup>11</sup>**

Avangrid, another subsidiary of Iberdrola, has put more than **\$23.1 MILLION** into one ballot question committee that opposes a ballot measure to create a state-owned energy utility.<sup>12</sup> Enmax, a power company wholly owned by the city of Calgary, Canada, has put more than **\$15.9 MILLION** into a political action committee opposing the same ballot measure.<sup>13</sup>

**MILLIONS POTENTIALLY  
LEFT STILL UNACCOUNTED  
FOR AS MONEY FUNNELS  
INTO PACS AND OTHER  
GROUPS ANONYMOUSLY**

“Dark money” groups and lax enforcement of disclosure regulations make it trivially easy for donors to funnel money into PACs and other groups anonymously, and there is good reason to believe that foreign donors take advantage of this.<sup>14</sup> Foreign intelligence operations use our election spending regime to easily place ads and run influence campaigns online to mislead, confuse, and divide Americans, turning us on each other.<sup>15</sup>

## IN THIS REPORT, WE REACH THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS:

- **Foreign influence can come in several forms:** social media influence campaigns, direct and legalized spending by foreign governments, spending by foreign-influenced companies, and money hidden through shell companies and straw donors.
- **The channels of influence vary,** including illegal donations of hundreds of thousands of dollars directly to candidates, dark money groups funded with millions of dollars from unaccountable donors, brazen spending by government-owned entities in ballot elections, and influence campaigns intended to sow division in the United States.
- **Foreign money allows non-Americans to purchase influence** in our political system for their own benefit, without having to consider how Americans will be affected
- Foreign influence in our elections presents a **threat to both our national security and the basic foundation of our democracy.**
- Americans across the political spectrum are **overwhelmingly in favor** of reducing the influence of money in politics.<sup>16</sup>
- **The For Our Freedom Amendment would empower the States and Congress to pass reasonable campaign finance regulations.** These regulations would be able to shore up major vulnerabilities in our campaign finance system and close legal loopholes used by foreign actors to influence our elections.

# FOREIGN ACTORS ARE EXPLOITING OUR BROKEN CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR MONEY-IN-POLITICS

## Nobody Knows Where The Money Comes or Goes

To get a handle on the problem of foreign money in our politics, the first step is being able to trace political money to a foreign source. But because foreign funds can be funneled through dark money groups and shell corporations, it can be nearly impossible to trace – and thus nearly impossible for Americans to truly comprehend the magnitude of this threat.

“Dark money” refers to groups that exploit existing laws to shield the original sources of their funds. Because organizations classified as 501(c)(4) social welfare organizations and 501(c)(6) business associations do not have to disclose their donors to the FEC or to the IRS, some of these organizations are able to function as dark money groups. Notably, such groups are allowed to accept money from foreign nationals, even if those groups engage in election-related spending.<sup>18</sup> Technically speaking, they can’t spend the money they receive from foreign nationals on election-related expenses. But, as a report published in the Harvard Law School Forum on Corporate Governance put it, “because 501(c) organizations are not required to disclose their donors, or fully disclose their election-related activities, it is virtually impossible to discern the extent of foreign-influenced corporate spending in U.S. elections.”<sup>19</sup> In other words, we simply don’t know how much foreign-source money is coming into our elections through these organizations.



Hansjörg Wyss<sup>17</sup>

One prominent example of how foreign donors can use 501(c) groups to funnel money into our elections is Swiss billionaire Hansjörg Wyss, a major funder of groups that support Democratic and left-leaning political causes. In total, two organizations funded by Mr. Wyss gave over \$208 million between 2016 and 2020 to three separate nonprofit funds, which then distributed that money to many progressive- and Democrat-backing groups. For example, from the spring of 2016 to the spring of 2020, nonprofits funded by Mr. Wyss gave over \$135 million to the Sixteen Thirty Fund, a leading liberal dark money group that spent in excess of \$63 million in 2020 to back Democrats or oppose Republicans.<sup>20</sup>

A spokesperson for the Berger Action Fund, one of Mr. Wyss’s nonprofits, claims that the Fund has a policy that prevents “any of its funding from being used to support or oppose political candidates or electoral activities.” But tax filings from the Sixteen Thirty Fund and other groups do not show how they use the funds provided by Mr. Wyss’s organizations, so there’s no way to tell. Swiss-born Wyss resides in Wyoming, but he has not disclosed if he is a US citizen or permanent resident.<sup>21</sup> Because of lax campaign finance regulations, we simply don’t know where his money is going. Dark money groups like the ones funded by Mr. Wyss’s nonprofits are known to take millions of dollars and shuffle it between many interconnected organizations, inflating their budgets and freeing up

more and more money for political spending.<sup>22</sup> This system, where a broad network of opaque groups can freely transfer funds and disguise their source, makes it extremely difficult to track where the money is going and determine whether or not it is being used legally.

Many dark money groups are the primary source of funding for major Super PACs that spend millions of dollars every election cycle. Although these Super PACs are technically required to disclose their donors, that means very little when all they have to disclose is the amount they received from their dark money funders. After that, the trail goes cold. For example, the Senate Majority PAC (a Democratic Super PAC) spent more than \$327 million in the 2022 elections and received \$58 million from a Democratic dark money entity named Majority Forward.<sup>23</sup> Across the aisle, the Senate Leadership Fund (a Republican Super PAC) spent over \$290 million in the 2022 elections, and received \$59 million from their dark money group, One Nation.<sup>24</sup> Neither Majority Forward nor One Nation are required to disclose their donors.

## Playing a Shell Game

It is also possible for foreign actors to funnel money into PACs via shell corporations. It's a known fact that donors are using shell corporations – companies with no actual business or publicly registered associations – to send money to PACs anonymously. The PACs are only required to list the company as a donor, but with no register of who owns or funds the company, the trail ends there and the true source of the funds is effectively obscured. To be fair, funneling campaign donations by this method through another person or entity is illegal, but the FEC has been slow to investigate any violations of these rules. As a result, it is entirely possible for a foreign entity to illegally engage in election spending with no repercussions from the US government, and with next to no way to confirm the funds' origins.<sup>25</sup>

Another example: Ukrainian-American businessman Lev Parnas was recently sentenced to 20 months in prison for violating campaign finance laws, including funneling \$325,000 from a business partner, through an energy company, to the Super PAC America First Action, Inc., as well as making donations to a candidate for Governor of Nevada, and numerous other incidents of using money from a Russian oligarch to purchase political influence.<sup>26</sup> According to trial transcripts, these donations were made to curry political influence in America; Parnas used the donations to get meetings and photos with President Trump and other major political figures, so he could convince foreign investors that he had the necessary political influence to successfully launch a marijuana business.<sup>27</sup>

In a similar case, a pair of Chinese-American businesspeople were charged with making over \$600,000 in donations to attend a fundraiser with then-President Trump in 2017. The pair specifically told their Chinese investors that since it was illegal for foreign nationals to donate to American campaigns, that they would use their company to make the donations, avoiding scrutiny. Their reason? To buy access to prominent political figures, and use that access to convince potential investors of their political influence.<sup>28</sup>

## Outright Corruption and Trading Favors

In September 2023, Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and his wife were indicted on charges of bribery and fraud. The indictment alleges

that Menendez received financial benefits in exchange for his actions to benefit Egypt, including ghostwriting a letter to other Senators asking them to lift a hold on \$300 million in aid to the country and providing Egyptian officials with nonpublic military information.<sup>29</sup> Prosecutors further allege that Menendez and his wife received hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of bribes, including a Mercedes-Benz convertible.

In 2022, the FBI raided Menendez's home, and found more than \$480,000 in cash stuffed inside jackets and envelopes, as well as more than \$100,000 worth of gold bars, some of which could be traced back to Mr. Wael Hana, an Egyptian-American businessman. According to prosecutors, Hana's company, IS EG Halal, received sole designation in Egypt to certify whether imported meat met halal standards, despite having no experience in the field. IS EG Halal's monopoly on certification raised costs for some American meat suppliers, causing the USDA to ask the Egyptian government to grant certification rights to multiple companies. Prosecutors claim that



at Mr. Hana's urging, Menendez called a high-level USDA official and asked them to drop their request. Although the USDA did not comply with Menendez's request, Hana's company maintained its monopoly, and Ms. Menendez received more than \$33,000 from Hana's halal company shortly afterwards.<sup>30</sup>

In October, a superseding indictment was added to the charges against Menendez, charging him with acting as an unregistered foreign agent of Egypt. The indictment charges him with violations of the Foreign Agent Registration Act, which requires individuals to register with the government if they are acting as "an agent of a foreign principal." As a member of Congress, however, Menendez is prohibited from acting as a foreign agent even if he were to register.<sup>31</sup>

Four former CIA officials claim that Menendez's interactions with Egyptian businessmen and officials resemble attempts to recruit intelligence assets. The indictment alleges that shortly after a meeting with Wael Hana, Menendez sought nonpublic information on staffing at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, which was then ultimately passed to an Egyptian government official. John Sipher, a retired CIA clandestine service officer and nonresident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council said that "Menendez sharing embassy staffing information is extremely troubling on a number of levels: It assists Egyptian security services monitoring the embassy and, more importantly, may suggest they viewed Menendez as a source."<sup>32</sup> The FBI is investigating whether Egyptian intelligence was directly involved in Menendez's alleged bribery scheme.<sup>33</sup>

## The FEC Decision That Opened the States to Massive Foreign Election Influence in Ballot Initiatives and Referenda

In this report, we've already outlined that, although foreign nationals are prohibited by federal law from spending or donating money to influence candidate elections, there are loopholes and serious



flaws in our system. Dark money nonprofits are obscuring the source of funds. Foreign-owned corporations are funneling money into our politics and not being held accountable. And outright favor-trading with foreign corporations and governments is occurring in plain sight.

Well, there's one more way for foreign nationals and corporations to influence US politics - and it's been deemed perfectly above board. The Federal Election Commission has ruled that contributions to ballot initiatives and referenda are perfectly legal. The FEC confirmed as much in a ruling from late 2021,<sup>34</sup> stating that nothing in present election law prevents foreign nationals from financing ballot initiatives.<sup>35</sup> The FEC based its ruling on a Supreme Court case, which held that federal election law "regulates only candidate elections, not referenda or other issue-based ballot measures."<sup>36</sup> The FEC's decision came after a complaint was filed against a Canadian subsidiary of an Australian mining company that spent \$285,000 to defeat a ballot initiative in Montana that would have expanded environmental protections in the state.<sup>37</sup>

In 2021, the people of Maine brought a ballot initiative to block construction of an energy corridor that would run 145 miles of power transmission lines from Canada through Maine to the rest of New England, including 53 miles of new construction in the Maine woods.<sup>38</sup> The ballot measure attracted significant foreign spending. H.Q. Energy Services Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Hydro Quebec (the government-owned provincial energy utility of Quebec),<sup>39</sup> spent over \$22 million on efforts to defeat the ballot measure.<sup>40</sup> Additionally, subsidiaries of Iberdrola, S.A., a Spanish power company, spent over \$42 million in total to defeat the ballot measure.<sup>41</sup> Just to be clear, that's spending by a foreign government entity and a foreign company in an American election - and it was entirely legal.

Among the many ironies in this FEC decision is the fact that ballot initiatives and referenda have been embraced by Americans as a form of direct democracy, where the people can have a direct say in the content of legislation. Yet because of our dysfunctional constitutional framework for money-in-politics, these legislative tools are being exploited all the more by foreign interests. When they want to influence the outcome of a referendum or initiative, foreign nationals don't even need to hide their spending or funnel it through other organizations. They can simply spend unlimited amounts to purchase influence over American ballot measures, undermining a key tool of self-governance.<sup>42</sup>



**2021 FEC ruling stated that nothing in present election law prevents foreign nationals from financing ballot initiatives. The FEC based its ruling on a Supreme Court case, which held that federal election law "regulates only candidate elections, not referenda or other issue-based ballot measures."**

## Our Foes and Our Friends

Most people can see the danger in allowing foreign influence from nations that are adversaries of the United States. Countries such as Russia and Iran are known to have run campaigns intended to influence our elections, and it's clear that this presents a national security threat. Iran attempted to promote disinformation in an effort to support the Biden campaign in 2020, and Russia attempted to do the same to support the Trump campaign in 2016 and 2020. Both countries used online influence tactics to sow disinformation and damaging narratives about candidates, undermine confidence in American elections, and worsen existing tensions and conflicts within the US.<sup>43</sup>

As Richard Clarke – a senior national security advisor in both Republican & Democratic administrations – put it:

“In Russian government classrooms the techniques of *disinformatia*, *kompromat*, and *agitprop* are taught as weapons of war to weaken an opponent prior to military action or as a substitute for military action. These techniques allow a weaker power to take on a nation that is militarily superior.”

“There is no doubt in Russia that these tactics are tools of their offensive national security program. Yet, in the U.S. some still doubt that direct foreign attacks on our electoral and democratic processes are a national security threat. They are. These tactics are as much — or more — of a national security threat to the U.S. as any Russian tank, submarine, or nuclear missile. And unlike the metal weapons, these information operations have already been used against us.”<sup>44</sup>

Our foreign adversaries are not the only countries attempting to influence American elections, however.

Even countries that we would consider allies, such as Canada, Australia, and Japan, have taken advantage of loopholes and lax regulations to spend nearly unrestricted amounts of money on advertising campaigns in American elections. Though these countries may be friends and allies, there may still be cases – often economic – where their interests differ from our own. They will take advantage of every legal tool at their disposal to advance their interests, including by attempting to influence US policy by making financial contributions.

The Foreign Lobby Watch, maintained by OpenSecrets, has found that since 2016, agents of foreign governments have reported spending more than \$4.1 billion on attempts to influence U.S. policy and public opinion, as well as tourism and trade promotion, under the Foreign Agents Registration Act.<sup>45</sup>

## Foreign-Owned Global Corporations

Another way foreign money makes its way into our elections is indirectly, through foreign ownership of corporations that can then spend money in our elections. Foreign nationals and corporations

are prohibited from making contributions to PACs, but domestic subsidiaries of foreign companies may do so, with these general guidelines:

- “The foreign parent does not finance the PAC’s activities through the subsidiary; and
- No individual foreign national participates in the operation of the PAC (including the selection of persons to run the PAC) or makes any decisions regarding PAC contributions or expenditures”<sup>46</sup>

Even if a corporation entirely abides by these rules, it is reasonable to wonder if the domestic subsidiary is following the direction, explicit or not, of their foreign decision makers. In the 2022 election, PACs connected to foreign companies spent over \$19.9 million: \$9.4 million supporting Democrats and \$10.5 million supporting Republicans.<sup>47</sup>

Some of the largest foreign-connected PACs are those affiliated with UBS, the Swiss bank (spent more than \$1.47 million in 2022), Japanese Toyota Motors (spent over \$1 million), and British defense and aerospace company BAE Systems (spent over \$739,000).<sup>48</sup>



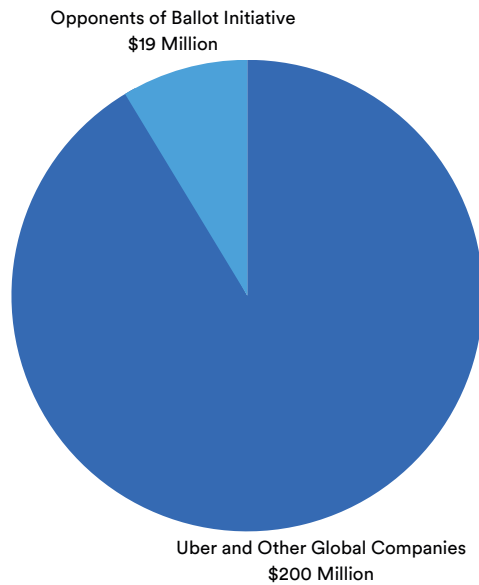
## U.S. Companies with Partial Foreign Ownership

Corporations that are partially owned by foreign interests are not restricted at all in their spending to influence our elections. Many quintessential American corporations, such as Uber, have major foreign investors. Uber’s largest shareholder in 2020 was the “vision fund” of Japanese conglomerate SoftBank, a \$100 billion investment vehicle created by the conglomerate with funding from foreign governments.<sup>49</sup> Another major owner of Uber was the government of Saudi Arabia, which made a \$3.5 billion investment in the company early in its life.<sup>50</sup>

In 2020, Uber and other global companies spent over \$200 million to reshape California law to their benefit, with a ballot initiative that would override state law and classify drivers as independent contractors, exempt from the legal protections offered to employees.<sup>51</sup> Opponents of the ballot initiative, mainly labor groups and unions, spent about \$19 million to try to defeat it.<sup>52</sup> A day after the initiative passed, Uber’s stock jumped 14%, representing an increase of \$10.5 billion in value.

Who profited from this jump? Uber. The election in California was little more than another

## 219 MILLION DOLLAR BALLOT INITIATIVE



business opportunity for these foreign companies and governments, who profited handsomely. Their American company spent millions of dollars to push a ballot initiative and override state law, and in exchange the shareholders got a massive payday when the stock jumped.

These foreign actors, who seek to exert influence on our elections for their own gain, understand how our political system works. When someone is able to deploy hundreds of thousands, or even millions of dollars in campaign contributions, they can expect that they'll get access to candidates and elected officials, and that that access will provide them with influence over the officials they helped. The primary difference for foreign nationals, compared to domestic donors, is that they have to go through extra steps to funnel their money through shell corporations and straw donors – but it's clear that many are willing to do so as long as the incentive remains.

## WHY AND HOW TO PREVENT FOREIGN INFLUENCE

It wasn't always this way and it should not be now. Since the beginning of our nation, the Founding Fathers feared foreign influence—and devised protections against it. Shortly after the nation's founding, the leaders of the new government were exceptionally cautious in guarding against foreign influence, or even the perception of it. They valued America's independence so much that they wished to preserve it even when it made the work of international diplomacy more difficult.

In the early 1800s, it was normal practice for ambassadors to give and receive lavish and expensive gifts, as tokens of status and a supplement to their income. Although the gifts were most often given as a matter of course, and not as an explicit *quid pro quo*, the founders did not wish for American diplomats and ambassadors to be motivated by personal enrichment over duty to their country.<sup>53</sup> This was such a concern that they enshrined a ban on foreign gifts in Article I, Section 9, Clause 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which states that:

“No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of the Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State.”

Thus, to ward against foreign influence in our government, the Constitution has a specific clause preventing Americans who hold office from taking any sort of title or emolument (financial compensation) from a foreign power. Bans on receiving foreign gifts were seen as ridiculous by many of the foreign powers of the day, but the founders still believed in maintaining the principle of American independence.<sup>54</sup>

In his Farewell Address, George Washington himself warned us that “history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government.”<sup>55</sup> Alexander Hamilton, in *The Federalist Papers* no. 68, warns against “the desire in foreign powers to gain an improper ascendant in our councils.”<sup>56</sup> The common-sense fundamental concern is that American politicians should act in the interests of the people who elected them, not foreign powers who might wield financial influence over them. Unfortunately, although the Founders were clearly aware of the danger of foreign influence, and put up guardrails against direct interference in the workings of our government, they could not imagine the world we live in now: a world where mass media and organizations like Super PACs and dark money groups enable those with lots of money to influence our campaigns and elections from anywhere in the world with just a few keystrokes.

In 1971, after President Nixon’s resignation following the Watergate scandal, Congress passed the Federal Election Campaign Act, which, among other things, banned spending by foreign nationals in federal, state, and local elections. On the other side of the same coin, in 1972 Congress passed the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, which banned Americans from bribing foreign government officials to benefit their interests.<sup>57</sup> America recognized that it was inappropriate for its citizens to meddle in the affairs of other governments for personal gain, just as it is inappropriate for foreign citizens to meddle in American elections. This was confirmed in *Bluman v. FEC* (2011), in which the DC District Court ruled that the government can prohibit foreign nationals from making campaign contributions, just as it prohibits them from engaging in other activities like voting.<sup>58</sup>

Americans and our Constitution have guarded the republic against foreign intrigue and undue influence. Allowing foreign influence in our elections runs contrary to the basic principles of representative self-government. If we are to have a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, then it must be clear who exactly *We the People* are. Foreign interests that can’t vote in our elections ought not have a back door to otherwise influence our elections.



## THE FOR OUR FREEDOM AMENDMENT: A BETTER CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The threat to our national security and the integrity of our elections posed by foreign financial influence is real and serious. Incorrect Supreme Court decisions over the past 50 years have degraded our campaign finance system into an unworkable mess that does not permit even the most basic transparency and regulation regarding foreign money influence in our elections. Under the guise of legal interpretation, the Court has turned policymaker, consistently striking down reasonable regulations passed by states and Congress, and giving wealthy donors and corporations a massive amount of influence in our elections. Although the Court hasn’t explicitly held (yet) that foreign corporations have a constitutional right to spend money in our elections, its other decisions

have made it so difficult to trace the sources of political money that prohibitions of foreign money are easily skirted.

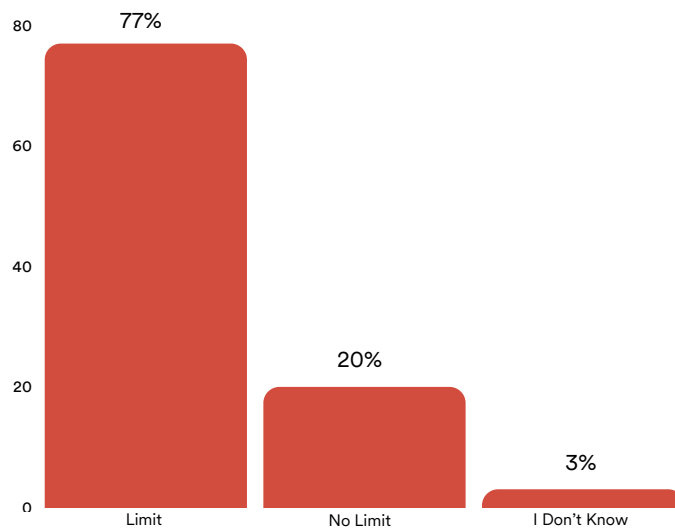
When the Supreme Court gets things this wrong, the solution is a constitutional amendment to course-correct, one that would explicitly affirm the right of Americans and our representatives to regulate spending in our elections. Without a constitutional amendment, states and Congress are not free to pass laws that could stop foreign actors from abusing the system of Super PACs, dark money, and front groups that make it too easy to sneak foreign money into our elections.

## A Constitutional Amendment is Within Reach

At first blush, a constitutional amendment may sound out of reach. In truth, however, the U.S. Constitution *is* amendable, and a modern-day amendment is getting more likely every day. Americans across the political spectrum are becoming more concerned about the role dark money plays in our elections, and they are coming to support the amendment.<sup>59</sup> A Pew Research survey found that 77% of Americans believe there ought to be limits on the amount of money individuals and organizations can spend on elections.<sup>60</sup> And another recent Pew survey shows that “reducing [the] influence of money in politics” is now in the top 4 of Americans’ policy priorities.<sup>61</sup>



**77% OF AMERICANS BELIEVE THERE OUGHT TO BE LIMITS ON THE AMOUNT OF MONEY INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS CAN SPEND ON ELECTIONS.**



Various versions of such an amendment have been proposed over the years, and the clearest and most workable version is known as the [For Our Freedom Amendment](#). The For Our Freedom Amendment would explicitly enable states and Congress to pass reasonable campaign finance regulations, and it affirms their ability to regulate artificial entities. This would allow them to regulate the organizations like Super PACs, shell corporations, and dark money groups that enable foreign entities to influence our elections, potentially forcing them to disclose their donors or blocking them from election spending entirely.

A world in which America’s elections reflect the will of the American people is possible, and the power in our democracy still ultimately rests with the people. Enshrined in our Constitution is the right to amend it – the right of the American people to balance the power of the Supreme Court

and correct unsound interpretations of the law. Passing and ratifying a constitutional amendment is not easy, but in times of crisis like these – where our republic and our right to self-government are being drowned in a sea of money – it is essential.

American Promise and citizen-powered campaigns across the country are fighting for the For Our Freedom Amendment to eliminate dark money corruption in politics. Visit our website at [americanpromise.net](http://americanpromise.net) to find out how you can help, and add your voice to the [Citizen Pledge](#) to stand up for democracy.



## ENDNOTES

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