



Media for Security, Rights, and Democracy

Presenters



Ginna Green

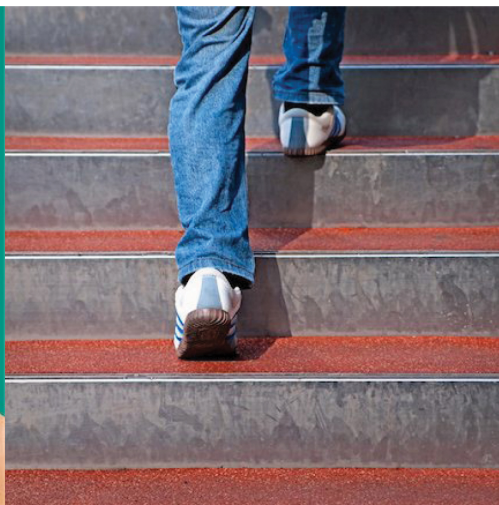
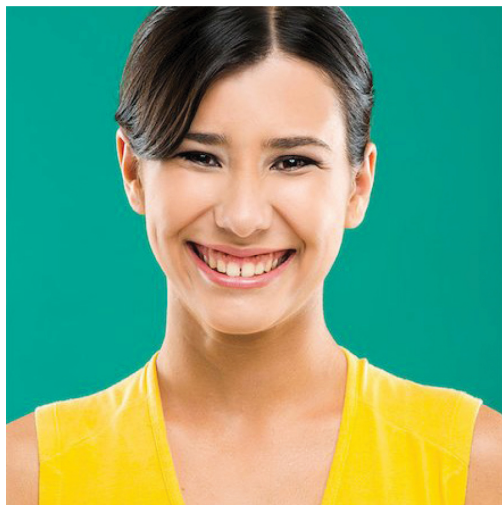


Tyler Creighton



MOVING AMERICANS TO ACTION

A MESSAGE GUIDE FOR DEMOCRACY ADVOCATES



Audience

Demographics	Total (%)	Base	Opp.	Pers.
Men	48	45	68	46
Women	52	55	32	54
Under 30	16	13	4	18
30-39	15	14	14	15
40-49	15	17	21	15
50-64	30	34	27	29
Over 65	24	23	34	23
White	69	57	82	69
AA	13	15	7	13
Latino	12	14	5	13
White Men	35	24	59	34
White Women	34	33	23	35
AA Men	5	9	4	5
AA Women	8	6	3	9
Latino Men	5	8	2	5
Latinas	7	5	3	7
Democrat	43	67	11	43
Independent	17	17	17	17
Republican	38	16	67	38



Framing

Limitations of the Corruption Frame



Barriers to Running



Barriers to Running

Money as “Corruption”

Politicians are being bought

Barriers to Running

Dēmos

U.S. PIRG
Standing Up
To Powerful Interests

The Money Chase

Moving from Big Money Dominance
in the 2014 Midterms to a Small
Donor Democracy

"It's very difficult for a first-time candidate, unless you're personally prepared to write a big check to break into it."



- David A. Smith
Primary candidate
Florida's 7th Congressional district

32%

of individual contributions
were from small donors
giving less than \$200

outspent
4 to 1

won
19%

of votes
in primary election

"Where I come from, where I'm running, I expected that I wasn't going to have huge donors."

- Amanda Renteria

Candidate for California's 21st Congressional District



26%

of individual contributions
were from small donors
giving less than \$200

outraised
1.5 to 1

won
42.2%

of votes
in general election

The outsized role of money in

By Valerie Ervin

I'm pulling back the curtain on this system because we all need to be willing to play to improve it. I decided to run because I believe there is a need to be active participants in the decision-making process. Here is the imperative that a national campaign for public financing of campaigns is an important legislative fight that we move forward. It is one of the ways to a fair, reasonable and objective process for the democracy we seek. We need who put our interests, concerns and needs on par with the wealthy. We need to continue to recruit and train more women and people of color to run. And, importantly, when they make the brave choice to run, the system must ensure that they can run on the merits of their ideas as opposed to their bank accounts. It's the only way we can create an inclusive democracy for all citizens.

Valerie Ervin is the only African-American woman elected to the House of Representatives Council, where she also served as council president for a year. Ervin

Why Saving Democracy Compels Me to Risk Arrest

🕒 03/02/2016 01:19 pm ET | Updated Mar 02, 2016



Stuart Appelbaum

President of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU)

Democracy works best when every voice is heard and every vote counted. But the mind boggling cost of political campaigns and restrictive voting laws are shutting more and more Americans out of the process and hindering our democracy from working at its best.

Right now it's more expensive than ever to run for office. In 2014, winning candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives had to raise \$1.6 million on average; winning Senate candidates had to raise \$10.3 million on average. Presidential candidates have already raised more than \$1 billion and we're still nine months from Election Day. To make matters worse, politicians are manipulating election rules to make it harder for some Americans — especially people of color, students, the elderly, and low-income workers — to vote. Since 2010, twenty-one states have passed restrictive voting laws and researchers have documented persistent modern-day voter discrimination across the country.

This out-of-balance system produces outcomes that don't reflect the needs and concerns of everyday Americans. It means wages stagnate, trade deals that harm workers are fast-tracked through Congress, and wallets on Wall Street bulge.

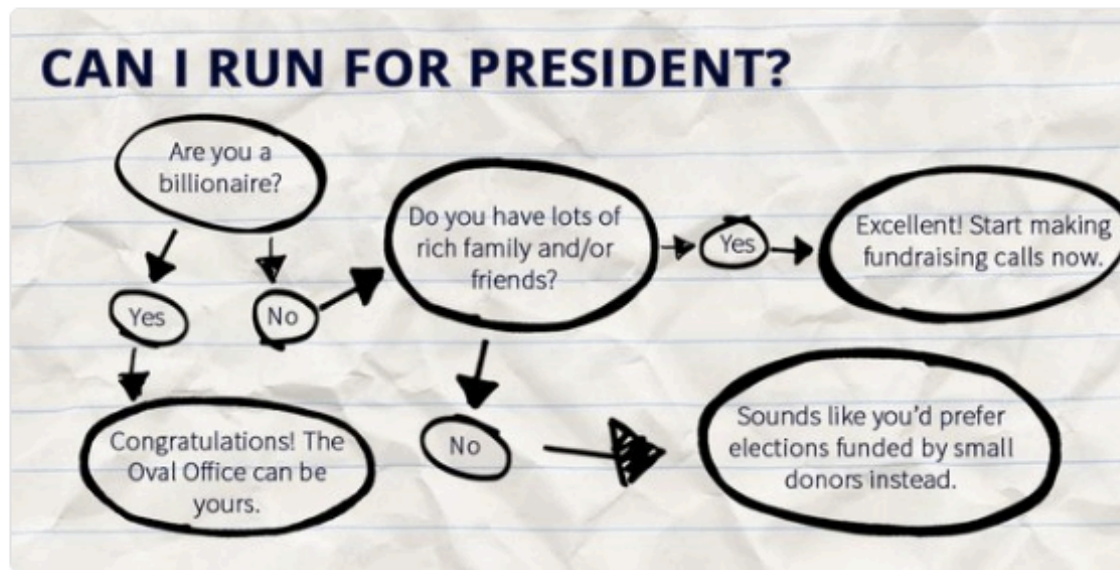


ReThink Democracy
@ReThinkDemocracy



Following

#IAmNotThePresidentBecause running for office is so expensive. Join us to #FightBigMoney!
npr.org/2016/04/04/473 ...



RETWEETS

63

LIKES

65



2:59 PM - 6 Apr 2016



DO Say

[X] denied representation

changing who has access to power

New American Majority

talent and energy of all

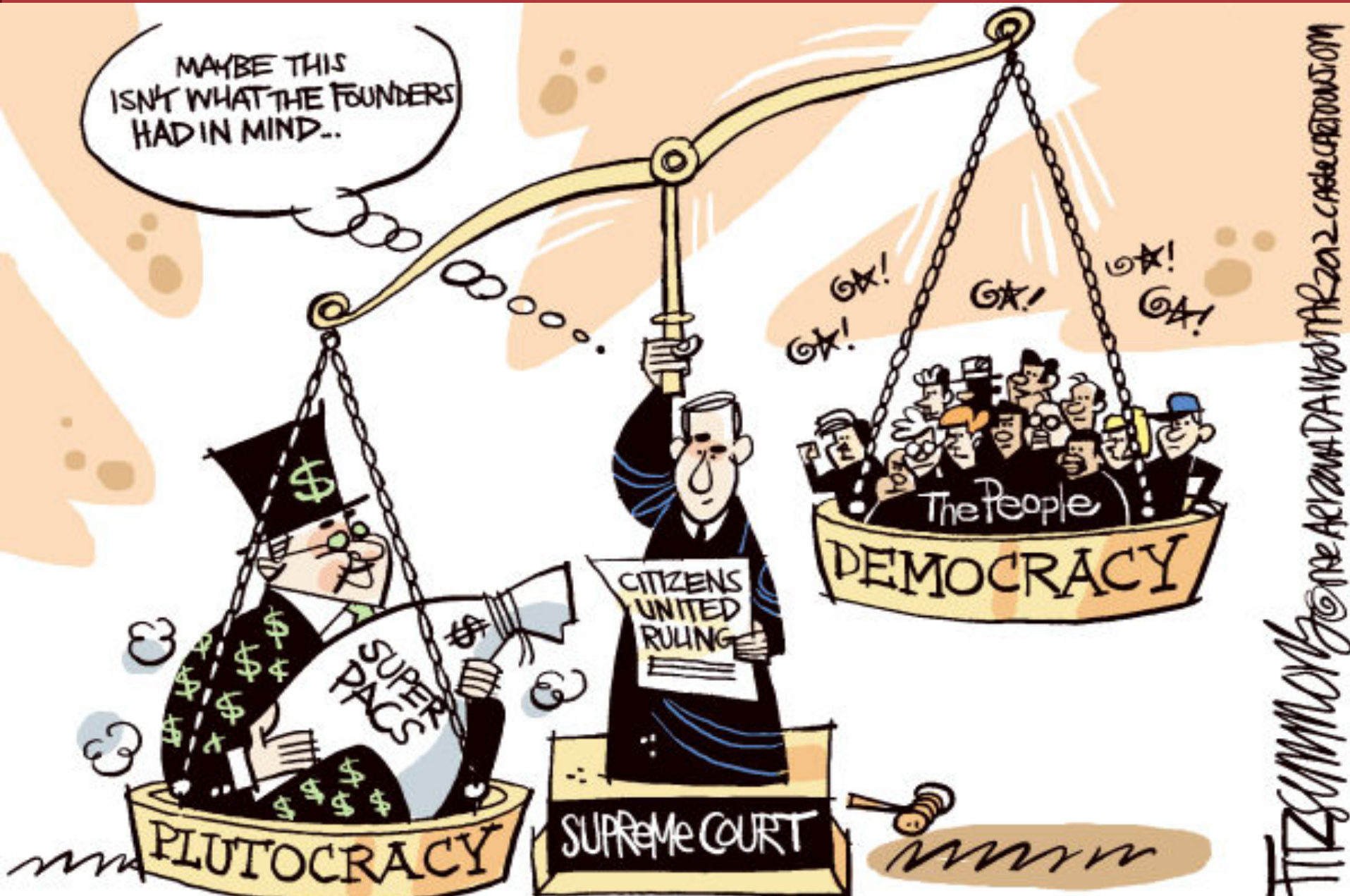
best and the brightest

political exclusion **barriers to running**

DON'T Say

voters of color **gender gap**
women or POC candidates/leaders/politicians
representation gap
racial gap **women candidates**
only [X] number of seats are held by

A System Out of Balance



What Do the Oscars and Our Government Have in Common? (Hint: White Guys)

02/26/2016 05:32 pm ET | Updated Feb 29, 2016



Like 44



William Roberts

Federal Legislative Director at Every Voice

Similarly, if we keep letting wealthy donors pick candidates and set the policy agenda, we'll keep getting a government that doesn't reflect America, and that's **out of balance** with the needs of everyday people.

We can have a government that is of, by, and for all of us.

If candidates could run for office without relying on the support of a handful of rich white guys, and instead gather small donations from everyday people in the communities they are hoping to represent, then we'd open the door for more women and people of color to run for office and win with the support of a more diverse donor base.

Why is no one asking candidates about THIS?

COMMENTARY

Miles Rapoport, president of Common Cause

Tuesday, 20 Oct 2015 | 1:51 PM ET



Three debates into the presidential season and the candidates have yet to be asked about an issue vital to both Republicans and Democrats: how they will **restore balance to our democracy**.

Voters and candidates agree our politics are now dangerously tilted toward the wealthy; the *New York Times* reports that only 158 families – in a nation with 120 million households – have contributed \$176 million this year; that's more than half of the money invested in the presidential election.

For Immediate Release

Common Cause Praises Obama's Call for Political Civility, Respect, and Reform

"I believe Americans are making a statement in early primary and caucus states and the President Obama used today's speech to drive home their message: **Our democracy is out of balance**. It should be about people, not party or money, and together – with mutual respect and understanding -- we can fix it. We want a democracy that works for and reflects the views of all Americans."

Opinion: Our democracy needs a wake-up call

04/07/16 12:54 PM

By Sam Waterston and Nick Nyhart



As our democracy grows more **out of balance**, catering to the desires of the wealthiest among us, others pay the price. Wall Street rakes in profits while Main Street struggles. The pharmaceutical industry profits while healthcare costs go up. Corporate polluters profit at the expense of our climate, the air we breathe, and the water we drink.

A System Out of Balance



Democracy Initiative
@Unite4Democracy



Following

Money in politics alters balance of power between billionaires and the rest of us, not GOP & Dems. bit.ly/1DcahM1 #GetMoneyOut



How Big Donors Affect American Politics

Readers discuss a column by David Brooks that argued that the influence of money on election outcomes is overstated.

nytimes.com



FreeSpeechForPeople
@FSFP



Following

While Congress lags behind, states & cities are leading the way to #FightBigMoney and bring balance to our democracy



Guest Opinion: Money buys policy, not just elections

When Jeb Bush announced that he was ending his presidential campaign, some wrongly concluded that money in politics isn't as important as most people think....

heraldnews.com

8:30 PM - 29 Feb 2016



Every Voice ✓
@EveryVoice



Following

.@JohnKasich We agree the system is out of balance, but when will you offer a concrete plan to address the problem?

qconline.com/news/local/kas ...

RETWEETS

7

LIKES

3

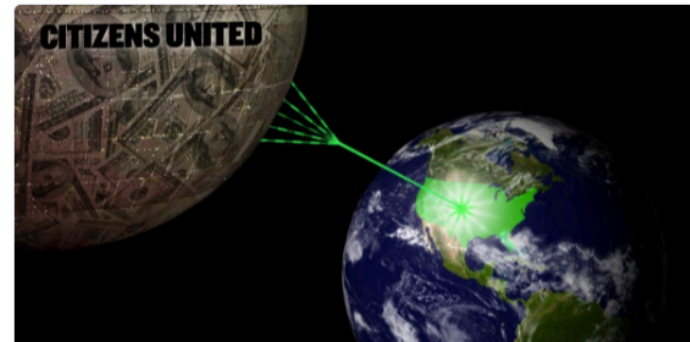


Common Cause ✓
@CommonCause



Following

Bring balance to our democracy by defeating the Death Star that is #CitizensUnited! #rebelalliance #getmoneyout



Blow up the Death Star!

Help me Blow up the Death Star on @ThunderclapIt // @USRebelAlliance #rebelalliance #getmoneyout

thunderclap.it

RETWEETS

5

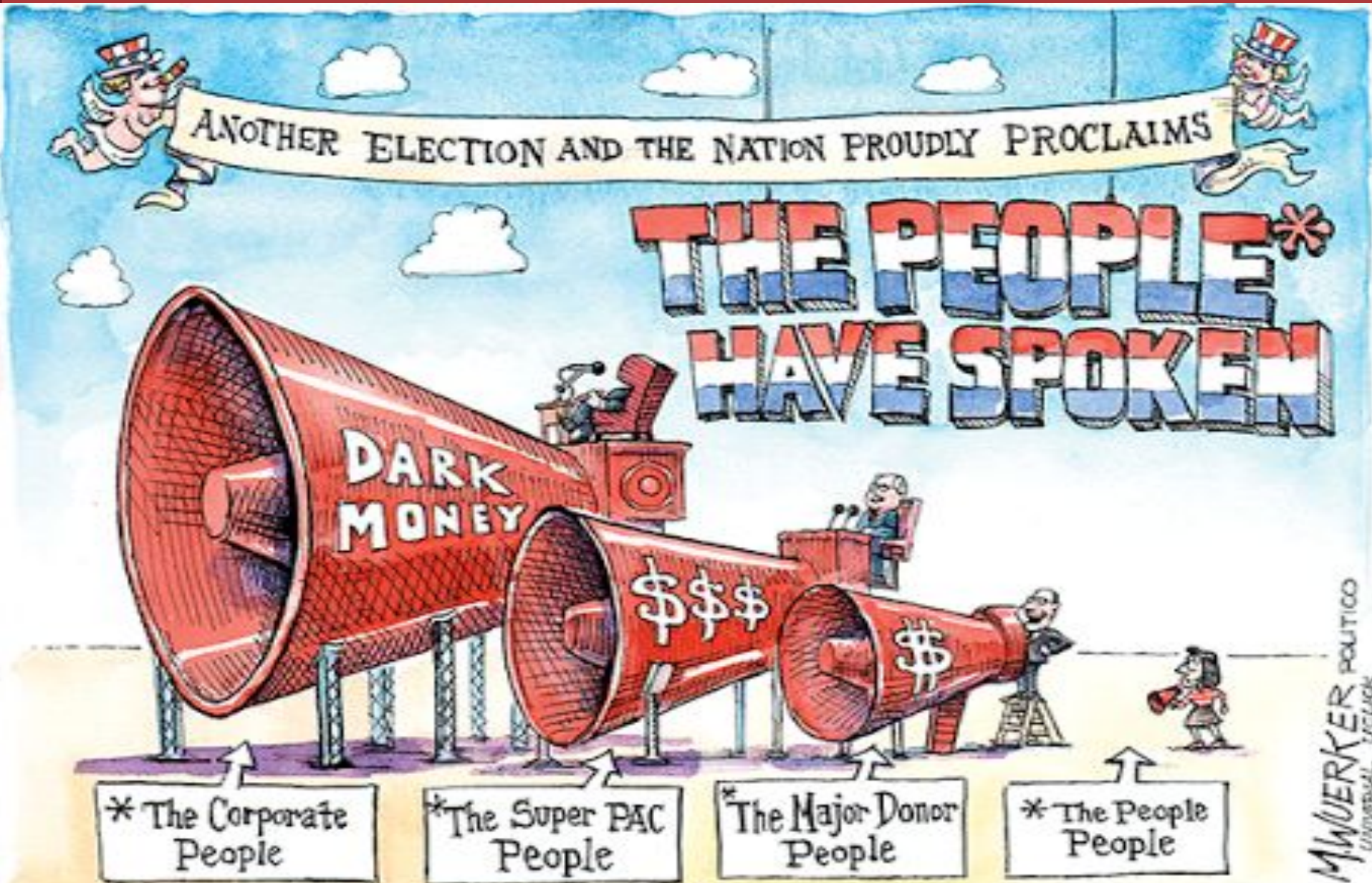
LIKES

3



2:40 PM - 7 Jan 2016

Equal Voice/Equal Say



Equal Voice/Equal Say: Discussing Voting Rights



Equal Voice/Equal Say



Ben & Jerry's ✓
@benandjerrys



Following

Every citizen deserves an equal voice in our democracy. Mobilize to [#RestoreTheVRA](#): benjerrys.co/1Mi8RbT



RETWEETS 18
LIKES 32



1:08 PM - 7 Apr 2016



Jeff Raines
@Jeff_Raines



Following

For every Chicagoan to have an equal say in govt, we need publicly-financed elections: demos.org/sites/default/ ... [#FightBigMoney](#) [#twill](#)

RETWEET 1
LIKE 1



ReThink Democracy
@ReThinkDemocry

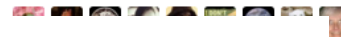


Following

Congress you have a choice: give every American an equal voice in our gov't or send us all to jail! [#DemocracySpring](#)



RETWEETS LIKES



Equal Voice/Equal Say



Everyone's voice is heard.

The next president of the United States should commit to a 21st Century democracy where everyone's voice is heard. The president should endorse, prioritize, and work aggressively with Congress to pass legislation to reduce barriers to the ballot box and increase turnout. The next president should support meaningful contribution limits so a wealthy few cannot use their economic power to shut out ordinary citizens.

Our democracy is based on the principle of *one person, one vote*— not one dollar, one vote. From equal access to the ballot box to the right not to be silenced by big money, democracy requires everyone to have a voice in the decisions affecting their lives.

.....

From equal access to the ballot box to the right not to be silenced by big money, democracy requires everyone to have a voice in the decisions affecting their lives.

.....

political loopholes
of, by, and for the people
everyone participates
every voice
out of balance
everyday Americans equal say
free & fair elections
everyone's voice should be heard

DO Say

corruption
unresponsive government
people are cynical
“there’s too much money in politics”
influence

DON’ T Say

The Price We Pay



“

When **[moneyed special interest]** makes large political contributions/influences policymakers, we all pay the price with **[negative personal outcome/consequence/cost]**.

”

The Price We Pay

TPM CAFE: OPINION

The Iran Deal's Latest Hurdle: Big Donors

When Iraq War hawks and defense contractors write bigger checks, everyday voters pay the price with a government playing politics with a nuclear warhead.



When big banks finance elections, we all pay the price like we did when the Great Recession hit and big banks were the first to get bailed out and the first to recover while many families in Iowa and across the country are still struggling to make ends meet.



When the opinions of a few wealthy individuals and corporations matter more to public officials than everyday voters, West Virginians pay the price with a state government that fails to take into account the needs of all its citizens. That is a cost we can't afford to keep paying.





Tyler Creighton @tylercreighton · 20 Apr 2015

Human suffering is the **price we pay** for an immigration policy that lines the pockets of private prisons. ibtimes.com/report-private... #GetMoneyOut



ReThink Democracy @ReThinkDemocracy · 27 Jul 2015

Deadly train crashes are the **price we pay** when railroad lobbyists block safety regulations. firstlook.org/theintercept/2... #FightBigMoney



After Amtrak Disaster, Rail Firms Ramp Up Lobbying to Delay Safety ...

Positive Train Control could have prevented the Amtrak crash. But Congress is about to approve a three-year delay in its implementation.

theintercept.com



Public Citizen @Public_Citizen · 17 Mar 2015

Military members losing their homes is the **price we pay** for a political system rigged for #WallStreet. ow.ly/KrosP #GetMoneyOut



33



10



[View summary](#)



M E S S A G E S A N D W I C H

THE BREAD

Begin and end with a strong, empowering aspirational messages, with the problem in the middle.

Talking about the future and next generation makes voters more hopeful and motivated to take action.

MAYO PROBLEM STATEMENT

Running for office requires personal wealth or support from wealthy people, which prevents regular people from representing their communities. This limits our choices to those who can amass huge sums of money.

LETTUCE ESTABLISH THE VILLAIN

Use “wealthy special interests” as the villain—not politicians or the government.

Across demographics, the villain that most resonates with voters are “wealthy special interests.” This villain can speak to a broad array of problems in our democracy today, and also invoke values of voice and equal say. Further, blaming politicians is problematic because they are key players in putting many solutions into play.

MEAT/VEGETABLES SOLUTIONS

Elevate solutions and moving forward over problems. To restore a more representative government, elect the best representatives, and get policy solutions that reflect needs of We the People, we need to address the barriers that prevent ordinary people from running for office.

- Spending and Contribution Limits
- Public Financing

Messages focused on solutions and moving forward test better than messages focused on the problem. People readily recognize the way in which campaign finance reforms could reduce the burden of modern campaigning and enable a broader diversity of candidates to run and win.

CHEESE SUCCESS STORIES

Tell the story of a growing and successful movement.

Give examples of solutions already working in other states.

Notably, while Success Stories was not among the top-testing messages, giving examples of solutions already working in other states appears to be important to overcome inertia among potential supporters and bring about change.

THE BREAD

Begin and end with a strong, empowering aspirational messages, with the problem in the middle.

Elements of a Strong Message

**Be Aspirational &
Counter the Cynicism**

Speak to a Reflective Democracy

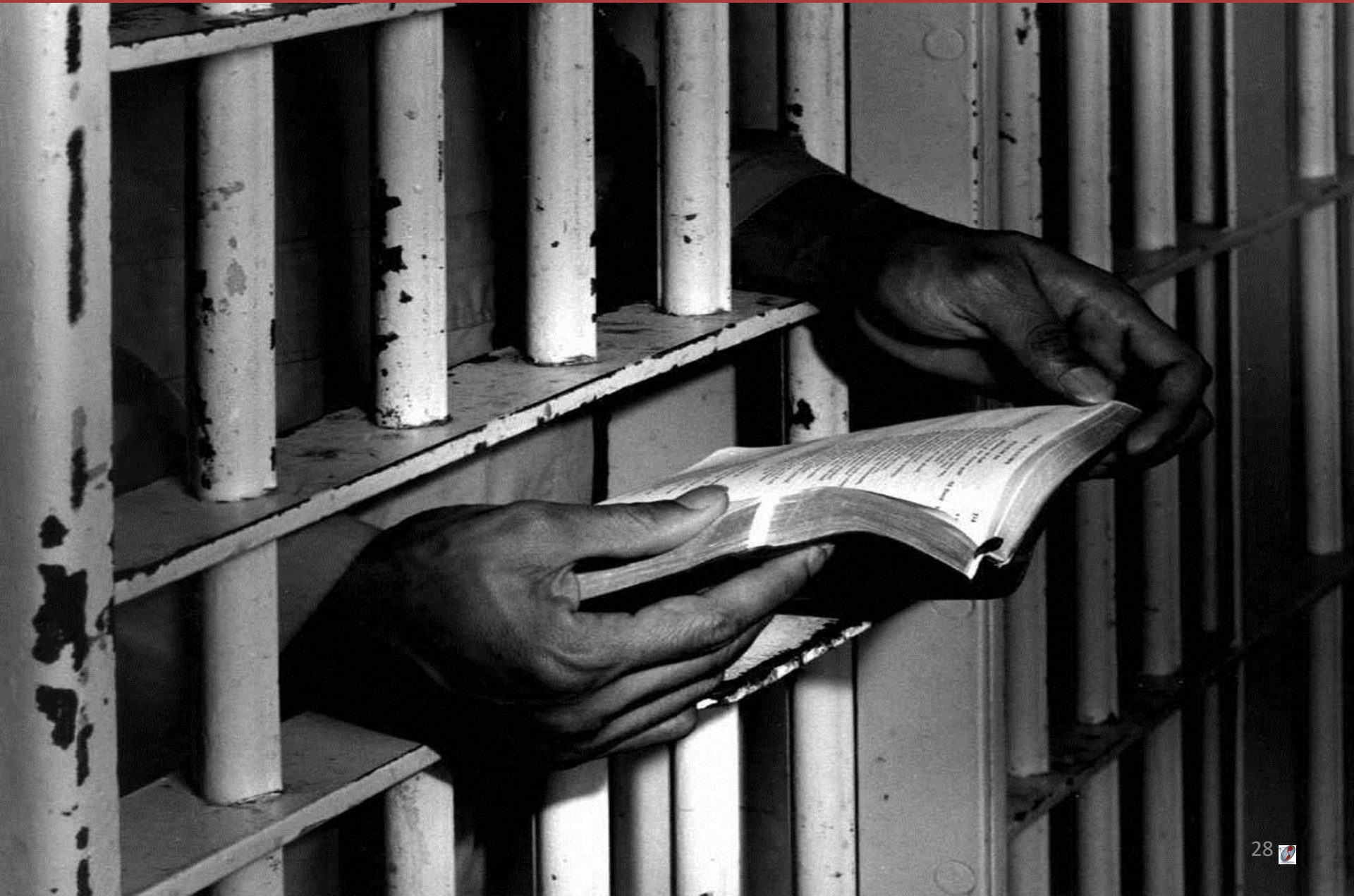
Connect

Address Real Solutions

Identify the Villain

Describe a Growing Movement

Connecting Money in Politics to Other Issues



It's just
theory until
it is put into
practice.



