

October 13, 2011

R E S O L U T I O N

- WHEREAS,** The real average hourly wage of America's workers has been declining since 1972; and
- WHEREAS,** The gap in income distribution in the United States has never been this concentrated among the wealthy since the Great Depression; and
- WHEREAS,** The corporate profits' share of the gross domestic product during the past years is greater than it has been in the last 60 years so that corporate profits have been totally divorced from the economic fortunes of the American people; and
- WHEREAS,** The top 1% of Americans control 47% of the financial wealth of America and the bottom 80% control only 7% of the financial wealth of America, as an example, in 1978 chief executive officers of corporations in the United States earned 35 times more than the average worker. By 2000 they earned 300 times the average pay; and
- WHEREAS,** A fair and balanced presentation of information is a fundamental necessity for a democratic government to function; and
- WHEREAS,** This concentration of wealth among a small percentage of the American public creates severe inequality in the unbiased flow of information that is provided to the American public because of the control of corporate media by the wealthy elite; and
- WHEREAS,** This concentration of wealth among a small percentage of the American public also creates a severe inequality in the unbiased flow of information that is provided to the American public because of the ability of the wealthy elite to fund and influence electoral campaigns to promote policies that will continue this concentration of wealth among the elite; and
- WHEREAS,** As Bill Moyers has written, "astonishing as it seems, scarcely anyone in official Washington seems to be troubled by a gap between rich and poor that is greater than it has been in half a century....Equality and inequality are words that have been all but expunged from the political vocabulary."; and
- WHEREAS,** We, the people, adopted and ratified the United States Constitution to protect the free speech and other rights of people, not corporations; and
- WHEREAS,** Corporations are not people but instead are entities created by the law of states and nations; and
- WHEREAS,** The United States Supreme Court, in its decision *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, overturned long standing precedent prohibiting corporations from spending corporate general treasury funds in our elections; and

WHEREAS, *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* unleashes a torrent of corporate money in our political process unmatched by any campaign expenditure totals in United States history; and

WHEREAS, *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* purports to invalidate state laws and even state Constitutional provisions separating corporate money from elections; and

WHEREAS, *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* presents a serious and direct threat to our republican democracy by further reducing the fair and balanced flow of information necessary for a democracy to function, especially in light of the already unequal distribution of wealth in the Country, and can only lead to a worsening of the income distribution in this country; and

WHEREAS, Article V of the United States Constitution empowers and obligates the people and states of the United States of America to use the constitutional amendment process to correct those egregiously wrong decisions of the United States Supreme Court that go to the heart of our democracy and republican self-government; and

WHEREAS, The people and states of the United States of America have used the amendment process to strengthen the nation and preserve liberty and equality and to reverse erroneous Supreme Court decisions that weaken this liberty and equality; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, That the City of Somerville hereby joins other communities across the country and calls upon the United States Congress to pass and send to the states for ratification, a constitutional amendment to reverse *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* and to restore constitutional rights and fair elections to the people; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED, That it supports the resolution offered by Massachusetts State Senator Eldridge and others, Senate Docket 01488.