TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO THE MAJORITY LEADER OF THE SENATE AND MINORITY LEADERS OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent and petition as follows:

WHEREAS, Congress and the several states have for many years exercised the authority to regulate and restrict the size of financial contributions to political candidates and ballot issues, to bar the anonymous use of such funds, and to require that individual candidates approve publicly the messages used on their behalf; and

WHEREAS, There has been a sudden and substantial increase in large financial contributions, in donations made and used anonymously, and in donations made to entities nominally separate from the candidates and outside their control to affect the state and federal elections in 2012, and such contributions may reasonably be expected to grow in number and size; and

WHEREAS, Expenditures that are extremely large, expenditures that are made anonymously, and expenditures made by entities nominally separate from and outside the control of individual candidates threaten the integrity of the election process by diluting the voices of other donors, distorting public discourse, and diminishing the constitutionally protected right to vote;

NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the congress of the United States exercise the authority granted to it under Article V of the Constitution to pass and send to the several states for ratification an amendment to the Constitution to return to Congress and the legislatures of the states the authority to regulate the size and timing of contributions to election campaigns, whether made to candidates or to ballot measures, and whether such contributions are made directly to campaigns or to groups making independent expenditures related to such campaigns, the authority to distinguish between natural persons and other artificial entities created by law, including by prohibiting such entities from spending money to influence elections, and the authority to require timely public disclosure of the source and amount of all such contributions.

BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately transmitted to the Majority Leader of the Senate and Minority Leaders of the Senate and House of Representatives, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of Washington.