



For Immediate Release

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BUSINESS LEADERS CAUTION AGAINST TRANSFER OF CORPORATE RESOURCES FROM JOB CREATION AND INNOVATION TO CAMPAIGN SPENDING

New CED reports reveal need for Corporate America to follow simple rule: “Don’t Give, But If You Do, Disclose,” in effort to end corporate campaign spending crisis

WASHINGTON, D.C, September 26, 2011 – Top business leaders and members of the [Committee for Economic Development](#) (CED) today urged corporations to refuse to participate in the unlimited corporate campaign spending free-for-all made legal by the Supreme Court’s *Citizens United* decision. Instead, they should invest precious corporate resources in job creation and other core business functions. At a Washington event with business and policy representation, CED urged corporate leaders not to spend corporate resources on “independent” political organizations – and if they do, to disclose fully that fact to shareholders and the public.

According to three related reports released today by CED, the rollback of campaign spending and transparency reforms (strengthened in the wake of Watergate) presents a serious threat to jobs and the economy, public faith in the corporate sector, and the vitality of our democratic institutions. During the 2010 election, the first after the *Citizens United* decision, it is estimated that some \$600 million was spent on independent political campaigns, a significant portion of which came from unknown sources. That figure is expected to skyrocket during the 2012 presidential election.

“A secret flow of hundreds of millions of dollars from companies to campaigns is bad for business’s reputation, bad for innovation, bad for job growth, and bad for our democracy,” said CED President Charles Kolb. “Corporate America can take the lead in the corporate campaign spending crisis by sending one message to every business, big and small: ‘Don’t Give, But If You Do, Disclose.’” The three reports, *After Citizens United, Improving Accountability in Political Finance*; *Hidden Money: The Need for Transparency in Political Finance*; and *Partial Justice: The Peril of Judicial Elections*, make several recommendations:

Don’t Give - But If You Do, Disclose: Simply put, corporations should not contribute to third party groups. If they do, they should make contributions public and subject to board approval and oversight. Return Democracy to the People: A robust public financing system that provides a multiple dollar public match on low-dollar donations would restore faith in democracy.

Ensure Transparency: Congress should reform laws to include disclosure of electioneering activities, including non-broadcast communications, voter registration and voter turnout expenditures that are not covered by existing regulations.

Judicial Integrity: States should end the election of judges and adopt a non-partisan, independent, commission-based system for recruiting, reviewing and recommending appointees for judgeships.

CED is a non-profit, non-partisan organization of more than 200 business leaders and university presidents. Since 1942, its research and policy programs have addressed many of the nation’s most pressing economic and social issues, including education reform, workforce competitiveness, campaign finance, health care, and global trade and finance. CED promotes policies to produce increased productivity and living standards, greater and more equal opportunity for every citizen, and an improved quality of life for all.