

Hearing: 3/25/2026 Bill HF2688:

To: Members of the Elections Finance and Government Operations Committee

From: Robert Robbins, for the bill

Member of Move to Amend

Inver Grove Heights

Thank you Representative Mike Freiberg and the committee. My name is Robert Robbins, I volunteer with Minnesota State Network of Move To Amend.

Health Care Companies Abuse Of Rights

This testimony is not about our poor health care system. It is about the ability of health care companies to use their “rights” to their benefit and our loss.

The FDA had a rule that drugs could only be marketed to doctors for approved purposes. In 2015 a U.S. District Court judge held that a drug corporation has a First Amendment right to market drugs to doctors for purposes not approved by the FDA. (*Amarin Pharma, Inc vs. U.S. FDA*). Now drugs are sold for unapproved purposes.

Big pharmaceutical corporations decided they could make billions by lying about a drug's safety to children and the elderly. In 1997, a suit charged that the FDA's guidelines prohibiting disseminating information of a drug's off-label uses deprived companies of their First Amendment right to offer information to doctors. That ruling prohibited the FDA from enforcing its guidelines.

Per capita health spending in the U.S. was \$10,966 in 2019. That was 42% higher than the 2nd highest spending country, Switzerland, the country with the next highest per capita health spending” (Kamal, Ramirez & Cox, 2020).

Yet another world wide rating has the US healthcare system rated at 35th in efficiency. (*Bloomberg's Global Health Index For 2020*)

Corporate capture is a huge part of the reason we pay so much for so little return. Lobbyists and donors use their “free speech” money to persuade our governments that only people high up in the industry know how to govern it and the result has been very rewarding for them.

Thank you.

Robert Robbins

Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077

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(*Amarin Pharma, Inc vs. U.S. FDA*).referenced in

Goodman, Ellen P. (2016, March 18). Big pharma, tobacco, tech - how the first amendment is being abused. *The Guardian*.

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/mar/18/apple-first-amendment-defense-big-pharma-tobacco-tech-companies>

(Kamal, Ramirez & Cox, 2020)

Kamal, R., Ramirez, G., & Cox, C. (2020, December 23). *How does Health Spending in the U.S. compare to other countries?* Health System Tracker.

<https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/chart-collection/health-spending-u-s-compare-countries/#item-start>

(*Bloomberg's Global Health Index For 2020*)

Bloomberg's Global Health Index For 2020. (2020, January 18). WorldHealth.Net.

<https://worldhealth.net/news/bloombergs-global-health-index-2020/>

Date of Hearing & Bill Number: March 25, 2026 - HF2688

To: Members of the Elections Finance and Government Operations Committee

From: Barbara Gerten

Affiliation (ex. student, parent, advocacy organization): MN Move to Amend affiliate volunteer

City of Residence: South Saint Paul

Chair and Committee Members - Good Afternoon. My name is Barbara Gerten. I am a volunteer with Minnesota Move to Amend.

BE A VISIONARY

This bill supports an amendment to the US Constitution that **firms up the ground** on which our Constitution was written.

The proposed amendment is **not** about policy, but about the principle of self-government.

Citizens United v FEC (2010) was based on assumptions that corporations are people and have the same Constitutional rights as living, breathing human beings; such as, the constitutional right of freedom of speech.

People across the political spectrum took notice when the US Supreme Court in *Citizens United v. FEC* overturned key provisions of the federal Campaign Reform Act enacted in 2002. The Court ruled that corporate entities, and labor unions, have the same rights as individual people to nearly unrestricted spending on political speech.

You already know the unimaginable amount of campaign contributions unleashed by this decision. I would like to bring your attention to several 2025 polls which report what the voting public has to say about this state of affairs.

POLLS SUPPORT the NEED FOR HF2688

- Pew Research Center reported on February 20, 2025, that “Roughly seven-in-ten Americans say “the role of money in politics” is a very big problem in the country today – the highest share of any of the 24 items asked about on the survey.”
- Reported in The Hill: “According to [a nationwide survey](#) of 1,000 U.S. adults conducted on 7 March 2025 by Pollfish, 56 percent believe corporate involvement in government threatens democracy.”
- New polling commissioned by Issue One and conducted this month (October 2025) by YouGov reveals that overwhelming majorities of Americans — and Montanans — broadly believe that large-scale political spending by corporations, dark money groups, and wealthy donors undermines democracy, creates the appearance of corruption, and reduces trust in government. The survey directed to Montanans found that 72% of Montanans — including about 70% of both Democrats and Republicans — continued to support the ballot initiative passed by roughly 75% of voters in 2012 that established a state policy that corporations are not entitled to constitutional rights, such as First Amendment free speech rights, because they are not human beings.
- In addition Issue One Policy Lead [Liana Keesing](#) wrote, “Montanans are sending a clear message that echoes around the country: Our democracy should be owned by voters, not bought by the wealthy few. These new findings show that people in every corner of the state — and across party lines — want a government that works for all of us, not just those with the deepest pockets. The proposed ballot measure is a bold, practical step toward restoring trust in our political system by ensuring that elections reflect the voices of citizens, not corporate interests. If Montana succeeds, it won’t just reform its own laws; Montanans can pave a path for states across the nation that want to reclaim democracy for the people.”
- This according to a ProMarket article dated December 14, 2022 “71% of Americans viewed large companies negatively as of late 2022 due to political participation, is driven strongly by Republican disapproval, though bipartisan dissatisfaction with corporate power remains, notes a 2022 Gallup article.”

- Gallup reported on February 7, 2022: “Dissatisfaction with government regulations on businesses and industries and the size and influence of major corporations are at their highest points in Gallup's polling. Republicans have become significantly less satisfied with both measures since Biden became president, and Democrats' satisfaction levels have not changed much. Although Republicans and Biden differ in their preferences for government regulation, they could find common ground in their mutual desire to strip major corporations of their vast influence.”

OUR COUNTRY NEEDS VISIONARIES

OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS MUST GIVE US HOPE.

THE VISION FOR A REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY IS CRITICAL

Since the Supreme Court ruled on Citizens United v FEC (2010), the decline of the United States of America to an authoritarian state has been swift. This country is in deep trouble and yet I do not see anyone out front leading with a vision to reset representative democracy to one in which the power resides with the people. Without a vision I feel our democracy is destined to the ashbin of history.

We, the volunteers of Move to Amend, have a vision and it is worthy of your support. In fact your understanding and engagement are essential. As it stands, our US Constitution has made it possible for artificial entities to have more power than real human people. It is critical that our US Constitution be amended to bring a strong human-centered meaning to the words “We the People.”

Please support this resolution to amend the US Constitution to firmly establish that money is not speech and must be regulated in political campaigns, and that human beings, not artificial entities, are persons entitled to constitutional rights.

Although this will not fix the entire problem, it will set a solid foundation on which our representative democracy will be strengthened. Strength will emerge from laws that place the responsibilities and rights of corporations, unions, nonprofits, PACs, etc. in roles that enhance, not harm, the lives of human people.

IN SUMMARY, Citizens United v FEC created a large crater in the base of our cherished constitution which begins with “We the People.” The basic tenets of our Republic, of our representative democracy, need to be clearly stated in our Constitution so that as Abraham Lincoln said, “that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish.”

Toward this end, please pass HF2688. Thank you.

*Please record your written testimony here and return this to wilson.lee@house.mn.gov
as an OCR compliant PDF (optical character recognition)*

Minnesota House Elections Finance and Government Operations Committee
Hearing Wednesday, March 25, 2026
Written Testimony re: HF2688
Andrew Ervin, White Bear Lake
Volunteer supporter of Minnesota Move to Amend

My testimony focuses on concrete examples that illustrate the two principles of this bill's call for a Constitutional amendment that is described in my colleague Jeff Clark's testimony today.

Treating the spending of money in the political process as free speech is the principle most visible to the public when they speak of "reversing the *Citizens United* decision." *Citizens United v. FEC* and the *SpeechNow.org v. FEC* decisions, both from 2010, have had a massive negative impact on the American political system. *SpeechNow.org* was heard in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. District. This decision determined that its analysis of *Citizens United* required it to "conclude that the government has no anti-corruption interest in limiting contributions to an independent expenditure group." The U.S. government declined to appeal this decision in the face of *Citizens United*. (Source: campaignlegal.org)

Together, these two decisions have led to Super PACs that have essentially unlimited fundraising and spending capabilities.

The upward trend of unchecked money is of great concern. The amount of money raised by Super PACs for federal campaigns in the last three presidential election cycles were:

2016 \$1.8 billion

2020 \$3.4 billion

2024 \$5.1 billion

(Source: Open Secrets)

At least three-quarters of the dollars flowing to Super PACs come from the top 100 donors. While this is a concern, a greater problem is that increasing levels of "dark money" is moving between shell companies and Super PACs, with the original donors hidden. This likely includes money donated by foreign nationals - who of course cannot legally contribute to U.S. elections. While likely an underestimate of the amount of "dark money" in U.S. elections, it has been found that it grew from \$5 million in 2006 to more than \$300 million in 2012, over \$700 million in 2020, and nearly \$1.5 billion in 2024. (Source: Brennan Center)

The other principle in HF2688 involves denying corporations and other entities created by legal instruments the status of "persons" with Constitutional rights. Because the Supreme Court has maintained for decades that they *are* persons, corporations especially have been able to apply the First Amendment, the Fourth, Fifth and

Fourteenth Amendments, and the contracts and commerce clauses, to deflect accountability to laws through litigation at every level. *Minnesota Sands LLC v. County of Winona* (2020) is a recent example. In this litigation, the company took the county to court over its ordinances prohibiting “industrial mineral operations.” The company wanted to mine silica sand for export use in fracking operations out of state. The lynchpin premise of the company’s suit was that the county was violating their Fifth Amendment right to future profits under the “takings” or “just compensation” clause. Why? Because courts follow the lead of the Supreme Court, who consider corporations to be persons entitled to such protection. After several years of litigation, Winona County did prevail. Because we now live in this kind of legal environment, however, very often state and local laws protecting or otherwise benefiting their citizens are thwarted in courts, or—knowing that this may be the outcome of expensive litigation—the government entity doesn’t even create such law in the first place.

We have an evolving crisis in the influence of big money in our elections and corporate power obstructing our government. A Constitutional amendment described in this resolution would eventually cure the problems described above. Please support HF2688 as an important step toward returning power to citizens whom our government is meant to serve.

Thank you.

Date of Hearing & Bill Number: 3/25/26 – HF 2688

To: Members of the Elections Finance and Government Operations Committee

From: Jeff Clark

Affiliation (ex. student, parent, advocacy organization): volunteer with MN Move to Amend

City of Residence: Saint Paul

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House Elections Finance & Government Operations Committee*

Representative Mike Freiberg, Co-Chair

Representative Duane Quam, Co-Chair

Committee meeting on Wed., March 25, 2026

Testimony on behalf of [HF2688](#).

Acting Chair Freiberg, committee members, my name is Jeff Clark and I'm a volunteer supporter with Minnesota Move to Amend.

A government that is not representative of the citizens who elect it is a serious problem. Surveys of the American public report that roughly 70% to 80% believe money distorts politics, and even that a Constitutional amendment to deal with this is desirable.* Yet our elected government has not responded to this reality.

Huge amounts of often unaccountable money in our campaign process is the most obvious problem. Super PAC expenditures in federal elections alone grew from 1.8 billion in 2016 to 5.1 billion in 2024.** Most citizens may know of the *Citizens United v FEC* decision and think of "money-in-politics" as the big, sole issue that's the problem.

However, corporations also wield litigation in courts to resist laws at the state and local level which are meant to protect and serve their citizens.

In Minnesota, a recent example demonstrates. *Minnesota Sands LLC v County of Winona* (2020) hinged on a local ordinance prohibiting the industrial mining of silica sands to protect environmental quality. Minnesota Sands wanted to mine them for out-of-state fracking. They took the county to court, using in part the claim that the ordinance was a violation of the "takings" clause of the Fifth Amendment, depriving the company of future profits. Such an argument would be untenable if the Supreme Court hadn't interpreted the Constitution to include corporations as "persons" with human rights. Winona won—but it took 3 years of litigation. There are plenty of litigation-based cases in which corporate power does thwart sensible laws.

Examples of Corporate Rule cites many of them here: <https://www.movetoamend.org/corporate-rule>.

H.F. 2688 addresses the problems above in two principles:

1. Only human beings have Constitutional rights. “Artificial entities” created by legal instrument have privileges written into law to enable their functions.
2. Raising and spending money in the election process are not equivalent to free speech under the First Amendment. Congress has authority to control this process and effectuate comparable access for all constituents.

H.F. 2688 simply petitions Congress to draft an amendment with these principles—but without any effect on Minnesota’s existing legislation or budgeting.

If we pass this bill and SF 569, Minnesota becomes the leader in the kind of amendment needed to address money and corporate power in government. We would be the 24th state to petition for one, but the *first* to do so with a comprehensive vision, not simply ask for what we anticipate the current system will accept. The *system* is the *problem*, and it needs more than a bandaid to cure it. Whatever amendment is finally drafted by Congress—*this* bill’s vision should inform the argument that produces it.

I urge you to vote **FOR** HF 2688. Thank you for your time.

Jeff Clark
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* Recent surveys from the Pew Research Center, OpenSecrets, Associated Press - National Opinion Research Center (NORC) and American Promise among others.

** OpenSecrets.

Date of Hearing & Bill Number: 3/26/2026, H.F. 2688

To: Members of the Elections Finance and Government Operations Committee

From: Matt Kreft

Affiliation (ex. student, parent, advocacy organization): Minnesota Move to Amend

City of Residence: Woodbury, MN

My name is Matt Kreft, and I am a volunteer with the Minnesota affiliate of Move to Amend. During my first conversation with one of the representatives, a thought popped into my head. It was almost like a reflex, more like an instinctive reaction than a rational line of reasoning. And I didn't really think twice about it until I started talking with other people about the group. When you describe this bill to people, when you tell them that there's a group that wants to limit the power of corporate lobbying and return power to the hands of the voters, the response is almost always the same. As if we've all rehearsed it, our knee-jerk reaction is to say the same thing that popped into my head during that first conversation:

"Yeah, we'd all like to see that, but it'll never happen."

"Never," we say. No matter how urgently a law is needed, no matter how many people want it, the simple fact that it goes against moneyed interests makes it an embarrassing thing to hope for. As divided as we are, Americans can still find common ground when it comes to money in politics. Nobody will vouch for it, but everyone will say "That's just how it is." We know that any legislation to curtail the problem will require some people to vote their own profits away, and we call that impossible because it's safer than getting our hopes up.

Americans have given up on their own voices. We have been convinced that democracy is powerless in the face of money. That is the world we have seen unfolding, that is what we have quietly accepted. That is what Citizens United has given us.

H.F. 2688 is an opportunity to speak up. This bill will make noise, it will show Minnesotans that their voices *do* matter, that someone is standing up to the giant on their behalf. Pessimism and cynicism have taken hold of us; we are desperate for someone to trust. If everyone who thought "it'll never happen" gave it a try anyway, we'd quickly forget why the problem ever seemed impossible. All we have to do is show that it *is* possible to choose people over money.

I encourage you to vote for H.F. 2688 and add your voices to the call for change. Thank you for your time.

House Elections Finance & Government Operations Committee
Representative Mike Freiberg, Co-Chair
Representative Duane Quam, Co-Chair

Committee meeting on Wed., March 25, 2026

Testimony in Support of HF 2688

Acting Chair and Members,

My name is Joakim Mendiola-Johnson. I am 21 years old, and I am not a policy expert—just someone trying to have a say in my future.

Like many young people, I have sometimes felt ignored by politics. Not because I do not care, but because I do not have money or influence, and it can feel like my voice does not carry the same weight.

I spend much of my time working at a summer camp, staying involved in my church, and helping care for my homebound grandparents. I am Latino, and I am from South St. Paul—a town where, for generations, people worked in the stockyards doing the hard, often overlooked work that kept things running. I am also the son of public school teachers, raised to believe that showing up and doing your part matters.

That is the kind of community I come from: people who work hard, take responsibility, and show up. But also people who do not always feel like their voices are heard when decisions are made.

Right now, it can feel like some voices carry more weight than others, and that weakens trust in our system. When I look at how campaigns and messaging work today, it makes me question whether regular people truly have an equal say—whether someone like me, or people in my community, are being heard in the same way as others.

And I do not believe that is a partisan issue. No matter where you stand politically, we should all want a system where everyday people have a fair voice and confidence that their participation matters.

This resolution, to me, is about strengthening that trust. It is about making sure our democracy reflects the people it serves—and that hard work, participation, and community still count for something.

I am here because I want to believe that my voice matters, that my community's voice matters, and that this system can work for all of us.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask for your support and a “yes” vote on HF 2688.

Thank you for your time.

Joakim Mendiola-Johnson

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Date of Hearing & Bill Number: 3-25-2026 HF 2688

To: Members of the Elections Finance and Government Operations Committee

From: Onyedimma Nwachuku

Affiliation (ex. student, parent, advocacy organization): Volunteer supporter of Move to Amend

City of Residence: Eagan

Good Afternoon co-chairs and members of the Committee,

It's time to bring dark money into the light.

I am enthusiastically writing this testimony to support HF 2688. This resolution has two crucial components:

1. Artificial entities are not people and do not have constitutional rights
2. Money is not free speech

Here is a brief history of my interest in politics. I graduated college in 2017 but did not consider voting until 2020. I found it difficult to become politically active initially. My preconceived notion was that politicians don't care about the common individual.

I have become increasingly more involved with community outreach in recent years. I see people trying to overcome shared obstacles during outreach sessions. These are barriers related to food insecurity, housing insecurity, and youth education. Positive sweeping solutions are hard to obtain. It is frustrating to see little to no progress being made in these struggles, and further lends to my battle with political apathy.

The "We The People" amendment gives me something to fight for. Here is the opportunity to embrace a comprehensive change in the modern political landscape for generations to come. Corporations are not people. Non profit organizations are not people. Unions are not people. Super PACs are not people. These artificial entities are composed of people. However, their collective financial stranglehold has been far too successful at influencing favorable decisions from politicians to the detriment of the communities they supposedly serve. Corporations, unions, and non-profits are significant contributors to capitalist principles that place money over human beings. Stripping their financial influence on our politicians levels the playing field and creates accessible politicians for everyone.

Minnesota has the opportunity to join 23 other States, and counting, in committing to a more collective representation of its constituents. Passing this resolution in Minnesota will contribute to the end goal of a new constitutional amendment to regulate political spending.

Politics should NOT be pay to play. Your allegiance shouldn't go to the highest bidder. Look no further than the 2024 presidential election to see record campaign donations to BOTH front running candidates. This is an all sides problem that requires an all sides commitment to HF 2688. I truly don't understand why we must delay any further? Members of the Committee, all

of you have kept your campaign donations above board, according to Open Secrets. Now is the time to move forward and remove/regulate money in politics.

A close friend of mine admitted that she doesn't vote. Her thoughts are that there is no true representation who can be trusted. She is a small business owner yet feels disengaged with the political figures who make decisions that affect her business. I'm certain thousands of Minnesotans feel the same dispassion. As mentioned above, I have been there before. It is not a welcome feeling.

You will find the overwhelming support for HF 2688 on both sides of the aisle by Minnesotans. I bring money in politics up in conversation with my friends and family. The support is there with little hesitation. Momentum is growing everyday!

Getting money out of politics only hurts corruption. Let us move forward towards full transparency from our representatives!

Thank you for your time,

Onyedimma Nwachuku

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Date of Hearing & Bill Number: 3/25/26 - HF 2688

To: Members of the Elections Finance and Government Operations Committee

From: Jennie Spanos

Affiliation National Codirector, Move to Amend

City of Residence: Pensacola

Testimony [FOR HF2688](#).

Chair and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I strongly support HF 2688, a resolution urging Congress to advance the We the People Amendment and overturn *Citizens United v. FEC*.

This resolution restores a bedrock American truth - that constitutional rights belong to natural persons, not corporations- and that money is not speech. Our Founders never intended state-created entities to wield the same rights as living, breathing citizens. Yet today, corporations and billionaires can pour unlimited, often secret money into our elections, drowning out the voices of ordinary Minnesotans. This doesn't reflect free enterprise - it reflects a government increasingly owned by those who can afford it.

The principles behind HF 2688 transcend party lines. Polls consistently show that conservatives, moderates, and progressives alike are alarmed by the influence of big money in politics. A majority of small business owners- many of them deeply conservative - oppose the current system because it rewards large, multinational corporations at the expense of local competition and community wealth. This amendment isn't anti-business—it's pro-accountability and pro-fairness. It simply ensures that individual citizens, not special interests, guide our republic.

Passing HF 2688 will send a clear message from Minnesota: we stand for self-government, honest representation, and a Constitution that serves - we the people. As stewards of this democracy, I urge you to stand with citizens across the political spectrum and pass this resolution to restore integrity to our system and faith in our elections.

I urge you to vote in favor of HF 2688. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jennie Spanos

Codirector, Move to Amend Coalition