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## Overview of Initiative 735, to call on Congress to overturn the Supreme Court's Citizens United ruling

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Initiative 735 is a non-binding ballot measure that would call on Congress to pass a constitutional amendment to overturn the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the 2010 Citizens United case. In that case, the Supreme Court ruled that the government cannot ban citizens gathered together as a legal corporation, labor union or other voluntary association from spending money to engage in political speech.

Specifically, the Court ruled in favor of the free speech rights of a voluntary association of people, called "Citizens United," who had been barred by the Federal Communications Commission from posting a 30-second advertisement for a film (called "Hillary: The Movie") on the internet within 30 days of a primary election or 60 days of a general election. The Court ruled that the government cannot ban books, films, commentary or other forms of political speech, and that the government cannot restrict the sources of information that are made available to voters at election time.

Initiative 735 calls on Washington's congressional delegation to propose and support an amendment to the Constitution which would overturn the Citizens United ruling and re-impose government controls on political speech. If passed, Washington would become the 18th state to pass a similar non-binding measure.

Supporters of Initiative 735 say it would help take "big money" out of politics, and that people who join together as a corporation or labor union should not have the same constitutional rights as people considered as individuals. They also say that spending money to express a political message should not be protected as political speech. The initiative campaign is sponsored by the advocacy group WAmends.

Opponents say that the Supreme Court ruled correctly in defending the free speech rights of Citizens United and, by extension, the rights of all people who join together as a corporation, labor union or other voluntary association. Opponents say free elections are the only way the people can hold government officials accountable, and that the government should not have the power to limit the messages voters are allowed to hear. They say that all Americans rely on the Supreme Court to uphold fundamental civil rights and that the Citizens United ruling should not be overturned.