

Washington, D.C. - On Wednesday, Reps. David Price (D-NC) and Mike Castle (R-DE) introduced the bipartisan Stand By Every Ad Act, to hold corporations, unions and associations accountable for their political advertisements. Rep. Price penned a column for The Huffington Post titled, "I'm David Price, and I Approve This Column . . .," on the importance of the legislation. The text of the column is provided below:

I'm David Price, and I Approve This Column

By Representative David Price

If you think special interest money plays too large a role in politics, be prepared for an election cycle that will confirm your worst suspicions -- unless Congress is successful in a race against time to dampen the deeply corrosive effects of the Supreme Court's decision to overturn century-old campaign finance precedents in *Citizens United v. F.E.C.*

By now many of you are familiar with the *Citizens United* case, in which five Supreme Court justices gutted campaign finance law as we know it by empowering corporations, unions and associations to spend unlimited funds to directly influence the outcome of elections by advocating for or against a candidate. Today, I joined with Rep. Mike Castle (R-DE) in a bipartisan effort to fight back against the Court's regressive decision.

Rep. Castle and I have introduced the Stand By Every Ad Act, which would hold corporations, unions and associations accountable for the political advertisements they fund. This legislation is modeled after my original Stand By Your Ad legislation, which requires candidates to appear in and claim responsibility for their ads and was enacted as part of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002. If candidates have to appear in their ads and say, "I approve this message," the CEO of a corporation or the president of a union should have to do the same.

If we do not hold these entities accountable, we will be giving them permission to run disparaging or deliberately misleading ads without voters ever knowing who's behind them. Some of my colleagues seem to desire a return to the Wild West of campaign spending: they have hailed the Supreme Court's decision as a great achievement for free speech. But others

on both sides of the aisle have clearly recognized the situation for what it is: the opportunity for corporations, unions and associations to dominate the playing field, intimidating public officials and drowning out the candidates' own messages. The least we can do is inform viewers who has bought the ads they are seeing.

Our bill also would expand accountability to the next generation of political advertising by applying Stand By Your Ad requirements to campaign ads conveyed via the internet or email. It makes little sense to treat a campaign video differently just because it's broadcast online instead of on television. It's important to note that this provision would apply only to paid audio and video ads and would not apply to the unpaid activities of bloggers and other online political activists, preserving the careful balance struck by the Federal Election Commission in its regulation of online political activities.

Finally, we also would address the need for accountability in "Robocalls" in the bill by requiring them to include the Stand By Your Ad tagline at the beginning of the call. Those of us who have lived through competitive political campaigns will be glad for the chance to hang up sooner rather than later on the inevitable call that comes right as you're sitting down for dinner with the family.

All of these provisions would restore accountability to our electoral process in places where it has been missing. The internet and new media are quickly altering the parameters of our debate, but our campaign finance legislation hasn't kept pace. Treating all communications equally, and giving voters the power to hold organizations accountable for their advertising, will help preserve the integrity of our political process.

This bill is by no means a panacea, but we do know it can stand up to a hostile Supreme Court if it becomes law. The original Stand By Your Ad legislation has been upheld as constitutional in the Court's 2003 *McConnell v. FEC* decision. Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) are working on a comprehensive effort to mitigate the damage inflicted by the *Citizens United* decision. They have included several provisions from our bill, and I look forward to partnering with them to meet the need for reform. We must act quickly, before the 2010 elections make all too clear the Court's destructive impact on open and transparent campaign dialogue.

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