

overturned decades of campaign finance law that limited special interest influence on elections.

I am deeply concerned that this ruling is weakening the voice of the American people in our elections. Monday the New York Times reported that, since the ruling, many nonprofit advocacy groups have set up sister organizations and specially classified themselves under section 501(c) of the Tax Code. Organizations are using the 501(c) status as a loophole to avoid having to disclose their donors' identity.

I want America's campaign finance process to be transparent. What do I mean by transparent? That the public knows who is paying for the message and how much. We have to be aware of the influence that money has on politics.

In response to the Court's decision, the DISCLOSE Act was introduced to mitigate the harmful effects of the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United*. The DISCLOSE Act would implement comprehensive disclosure requirements on corporations, unions, and other organizations that spend money on Federal election campaigns. This is common sense. When every one of us here in this Senate, Republicans and Democrats, runs for reelection, we have to state in our advertisements that we approved the ad. There is no reason we should not hold corporations and unions to the same standard. By increasing the transparency of campaign spending by these groups, this legislation seeks to prevent unregulated corporate power over elections.

Under the legislation, the CEOs of corporations, the leaders of unions and other organizations would be required to appear on camera for the election advertisements they have funded. The DISCLOSE Act would also require that the top five donors from organizations that pay for campaign advertisements be listed on the screen at the end of the television ad.

Additionally, the legislation would take steps to eliminate the influence of foreign corporations on American elections. I believe the Court's decision puts the voices of ordinary Americans at risk of being drowned out by direct corporate spending on elections. America deserves open and transparent elections and that is why I am a cosponsor of the DISCLOSE Act. I believe the DISCLOSE Act would ensure that average American voters are the ones in charge during elections, not special interest money and not foreign corporations.

I can assure you I will continue to do everything within my power and work with my colleagues in the Senate to protect the integrity of the election process. I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will join us in this effort.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE DREAM ACT

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, one of the many values that make America so great is that no matter where we start off from in life we believe that we all deserve to have a shot at the American dream.

We all deserve an opportunity to work hard, support our families, and give back to the Nation that has been there for us all of our lives.

This is an American value I cherish. It is one I feel very strongly we ought to maintain and strengthen. And it is why I stand here today to talk about the DREAM Act, which would help us do exactly that.

The amendment we proposed was a narrowly tailored piece of legislation that was developed with Democrats and Republicans working together.

And I was extremely disappointed that Senate Republicans refused to even allow us to begin debate on this critical issue.

The DREAM Act would give a select group of undocumented students the chance to become permanent residents if they came to this country as children, are long-term U.S. residents, have good moral character, and attend college for at least 2 years or enlist in the military.

Under this bill, tens of thousands of well-qualified potential recruits would become eligible for military service for the first time.

These are young people who love our country and are eager to serve in the Armed Forces during a time of war.

And the DREAM Act would add a very strong incentive for them to enlist by providing a path to permanent legal status.

It would also make qualified students eligible for temporary legal immigration status upon high school graduation, which would lead to permanent residency if they attend college.

And most importantly, it would allow the young people who want to give back to America an opportunity to do so.

This is about our values as a nation.

But it is also about real communities. And real people in my home State of Washington and across the country.

I want to share a few stories I have heard that demonstrate why the DREAM Act is so critical.

I got a letter from a young man named Carlos, who was brought to the United States when he was just 2 years old.

Carlos' mom went to work every day to provide for her son, but she never told him that he was undocumented.

It was only when he wanted to go overseas on a school community service trip that he found out.

Carlos excelled academically and helped his family out with money by selling hot dogs after school.

And by the end of high school, he was student body vice president and had received a scholarship to attend the University of Washington, where he is scheduled to start this year.

Carlos is going to continue selling hot dogs to pay for textbooks, and his dream is to go to law school and become a civil rights lawyer when he graduates.

I also heard from Judith, from Tacoma, another undocumented immigrant.

Judith recently graduated from high school and she told me that she dreams of joining the Navy and serving her country.

And I heard from Luis, a junior at Whitworth University in Washington State.

Luis is excelling at school, but because he is undocumented he has been unable to apply for work-study programs, internships, or federally funded scholarships.

He told me he wants to graduate and give back to the community by working with young people. That is his dream, but he is afraid that his status will prevent him from achieving that goal.

Luis told me he lives in fear of being deported, that the United States is his home, and that he wants nothing more than to be given a shot at the American dream.

The only way that can happen, the only way any of these young people can get that shot, is if we pass the DREAM Act.

The stories I told here today are of just three of the young people whose lives this affects, but I have received hundreds of stories just like theirs.

And this issue touches so many more across the country.

The amendment we proposed would have allowed us to take a first step toward fixing an immigration system that is clearly broken with real solutions that will help real people.

And for me, this is not just about immigration, it is about what type of country we want to be.

America has long been a beacon of hope for people across the world.

And I believe that to keep that beacon bright we need to make sure young people like Carlos, Judith, and Luis are given a shot at the American dream.

The dream that was there for me, that is there for my children and grandchild, and that is there for millions of others across this great country.

So once again, I am extremely disappointed that Senate Republicans blocked our attempt to begin debate on the legislation this amendment was attached to.

I am going to keep fighting for the DREAM Act.

And I am going to keep working toward comprehensive immigration reform that helps our economy, affords

the opportunities we have offered to generations of immigrants, maintains those great American values that I hold so dear, and improves our security.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes, we are.

THE DISCLOSE ACT

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I come to floor today to tell a sad, sad story of hypocrisy. It is not the first time we have told stories of hypocrisy around this Capitol Building, but this one is a particularly sad story of hypocrisy because right now, the ending is ugly.

In America, we like nice endings. This story of hypocrisy has a very bad ending. The name of this story is, Who is trying to buy your government? There are folks out there right now trying to buy your government. The saddest part of this story is that we have no idea who they are. So why is it a story of hypocrisy? Well, we can start with how we got here.

I have heard so many times—I cannot count how many times I have heard my colleagues in the other party talk about the evils of an activist court. Well, we have to make sure we do not have activist judges. Well, no, I am not opposed to this nominee because he is appointed by a Democratic President; I am opposed to this nominee because of activism, evil activism. We have to watch out for activism.

So along comes the Citizens United case. If you looked up “judicial activism” in a reference book, you would find the title “Citizens United.” This Court went off the tracks. They created precedent out of whole cloth in an effort to turn our democracy into a race for the highest bidder.

I think it is hypocritical for people to come before the Senate Judiciary Committee and be eloquent—because these are all smart people—very eloquent about the evils of judicial activism and then proceed to dismantle a system that is all about the public’s right to know.

There is another part of this that is hypocritical, besides the notion that somehow conservative people are not judicial activists. They are not judicial activists when they are active for something you believe in. Then it is not activism. In other words, judicial activism is in the eye of the beholder. I can think of a lot of Supreme Court cases that could back up that assertion.

The other thing that is so hypocritical about this is the ridiculous notion that so many people in this body have talked about transparency like it is so near and dear to them. We must have transparency. We must have an open door. We must have sunlight. Let me read a few quotes. This is rich:

Public disclosure of campaign contributions and spending should be expedited . . .

Think about that term, especially when we realize where it came from.

Public disclosure of campaign contributions and spending should be expedited so voters can judge for themselves what is appropriate.

Good, old-fashioned common sense. That is from the leader of the Republican Party.

How about this one:

I think what we ought to do is we ought to have full disclosure, full disclosure of all the money we raise and how it is spent. And I think that sunlight is the best disinfectant.

That came from the leader of the Republican Party in the House.

I think the system needs more transparency so people can more easily reach their own conclusions.

I couldn’t agree more. That comes from the Senator heading up the Republican effort to elect Republican Senators this year.

I could go on and on. We have a Supreme Court decision that turns the section of the IRS Code, 501(c), into an open bazaar. What was supposed to be not political and not for profit is now a mushrooming industry of nonaccountable, unaccountable organizations that nobody has any idea where they are coming from, who is writing the checks, and what their motivations are. These groups have fallen into a regulatory nirvana. There is no regulation. There is nobody watching. There is nobody asking questions.

These are social welfare organizations, 501(c)(4)s, like Crossroads, which is one that sprung up. It has been the top spender. It hasn’t been the Republican committees or the Democratic committees. The top spender in the Senate races is a group we have no idea what it is or who is writing the checks.

We have to realize they don’t even have to file anything with the government, with the IRS, until February, March, April. How many people think these organizations are going to be around after November? Really? How naive are you? They have to find some excuse, right, because this is embarrassing that they are blocking our efforts at making campaign finance contributions transparent?

One can’t really say: Hey, we are going to change our mind about transparency because we have an election to win and we have a bunch of rich people out here who want to write big checks or big corporations that want to write big checks. So what do you do? You try to make it about the big, bad unions. These rules need to apply to unions too.

Unions are doing ads right now. They should be saying what unions are doing

them. We should know where their money comes from. We do know where their money comes from. It comes from their members. But we ought to know who is doing it. This law requires the same thing of unions that it requires of anyone else writing big checks.

Who is going to buy your government? It could be like a game show. We could have a big wheel and spin the wheel and people could guess who is buying the government. I am worried about government contractors. There has been big money in government contracting. I have noticed from firsthand experience that when we start shaking the trees of these government contractors, they fight back. As I have tried to clean up some of the contracting messes that have littered the financial landscape of the Federal Government, I have run into an amazing amount of resistance from the underground power of these government contractors.

Let’s look at Blackwater. We know they have created dozens of fake names to do business with the government. Many of them are noncompetitive. Many of them are highly lucrative. They are hiding the identity of their company for purposes of contracting.

Can colleagues imagine what they are capable of if they get to write checks to influence elections with nobody knowing it? I am in big trouble. I have gone after a lot of these big contractors. Now I think my picture is probably on a lot of their dart boards. Now they don’t have to worry about throwing a dart. They don’t have to worry about it. All they have to do is anonymously write big checks. Millions of dollars. Write a check for \$10 million. Blow out an election in a State. Nobody has to know who did it.

Foreign interests, yes; the Citizens United case created all kinds of loopholes that are actually delineated in the case. They explained the loopholes that are being created, if one reads the entire decision, for foreign corporations. It is like after that case we have fallen down a rabbit hole in terms of everything we should believe in in terms of our election processes.

In the old days, they used to have the term, “the bagman.” The bagman was not exactly a positive term for people. The bagman was the guy who was in charge of carrying the money around in a bag. There was a time in this democracy where they actually did that. Big bags of cash were carried around and delivered to people’s desks in every level of government in the country. The people in this great democracy rose up and said: We want to clean up this mess. We want candidates to have to report how much money they are getting.

Some States said: We want to limit how much they are getting. We limit how much we get. I don’t know why we are not honest about this. I don’t know why they don’t just propose an alternative bill that we do away with any kind of limits. Frankly, it might be a better tradeoff.