Ken Pentel
with the Ecology Democracy Party
for Governor
& Erin Wallace for Lt Governor

Money in Politics

Pentel & Wallace Mandate Ending Big Money in Minnesota Politics

Even though there are many good candidates and elected representatives, the amount of money that influences our government continues to make a mockery of the idea of representative democracy.

Dan Weeks from ACR (Americans for Campaign Reform) 2009:
First, when someone is deciding whether or not to run for office the first question they ask themselves is, *do I have enough money or can I raise enough money to run?* As a result, money becomes a barrier to entry into the political process. Second, 1/10th of 1% (0.1%) of the population provides 3/4 (75%) of the money that's used to fund political campaigns. That gives a very small and wealthy minority of the population a very large majority of the power in determining who runs, who wins, and how issues are addressed.

Overall, the tiny percentage of people who give are using the public commons (Earth, government, and airwaves) to enrich their private interests.

In 2004, per capita, Minnesota was the most lobbied state in the country. Over $50 million dollars were spent lobbying policy makers and regulatory agencies. In 2005, $55 million was spent. Lobbying by these special interest groups has taken over our government and has thus defined our culture. Their power of influence and numbers are so massive that the average citizen is no longer heard. In fact, the average citizen has become irrelevant in the political arena. As these special interests define policy because of their profit driven needs, they gradually dismember the earth. This dysfunctional pattern must cease. It can only end when the expectations of we the people are raised and we take a stand against continued toleration of this dysfunction.

Pertaining to the direction of reform in the financial industry at the end of 2009:
"Whatever the intentions, this 'reform' would effectively legitimize the existence of a corporate state. This concentrated power would be neither socialism nor capitalism, but a grotesque hybrid that combines the worst qualities of both systems. Government and politics would become even more responsive to big money, but also able to tamper intimately with private enterprise, picking winners and losers based on political loyalties, not on performance. Capitalism with its inherent tendency toward monopoly would have the means to monopolize democracy." - William Grieder: 3/23/09, *Common Dreams News.*

Presently, corporations are setting policies and agendas at the State, Federal, and now Global level through the World Trade Organization. To name just a few offenders: Cargill, Goldman Sachs, 3M, Wells Fargo, Xcel Energy, and Exxon/Mobil. These corporations and their front groups (The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and MN Business Partnership Inc.) have staff who go into work every day to dominate our government as they reinforce and promote the growth economy model while they centralize control over markets and increase profits. And whatever the rationalization for allowing this behavior is, Ken Pentel for Governor and its supporters are going to have to become mentally and physically strong and as determined, if not more so, to achieve our mandates.

As long as a small percentage of individuals hell bent on financial gain at all costs are allowed to maintain externalities like not paying financially for the consequences of their pollution, the ramifications of extinctions, infusion of cancer into our society, and other critical issues not included in the proverbial bottom line, they will have an advantage over the average citizen. Citizens, the everyday people, are in turn left damaged and demoralized. People who understand and want to deal with these issues are not willing to kill habitats to extinction or leave massive toxins for the next generation. They are people who desire to do the right thing yet have no power to implement the right actions. Why should the masses set on moral fair play continually lose, and, in essence, concede the planet, fellow creatures, and the future of their children, because they don't have the financial wherewithal to challenge this insane mechanism? **No More!**

The Pentel/Wallace campaign will attempt to return the power to the people and implement the transformations needed to make it a more just, honest, and ecologically sound government and financial construct.
The time wasted by the dominant political parties and candidates raising funds is needed now for solving the most pressing problems that humans have ever had to face. We need people who are thoughtful and have the interest of the ecology and the common people at heart. We cannot afford to have decisions or implementation of policy set by a handful of rich individuals or misguided people in corporations whose only goal is to control markets and enhance their profit margin.

Our society has been driven and conditioned into complacency. The mass majority is aware that this has been going on for decades but we have been so ingrained with low expectations for ourselves and more specifically our politicians and government that we allow this to continue. This does us all an injustice, making us weaker, and leading us ALL to a lower and lower quality of living.

There are many ways to remedy this. Time is of the essence. We must act now.

Sources:

-*The Center for Public Integrity* , 910 17th Street NW , Suite 700, Washington, DC 20006 USA , (202) 466-1300 , http://www.publicintegrity.org/ (Follow their programs called *Lobby Watch* and track Minnesota.)
-*Campaign Finance & Public Disclosure Board,* 190 Centennial Office Building, 658 Cedar Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55155, Hours: 7:30 to 4:30 Monday through Friday, except for state holidays , 651-296-5148 or 800-657-3889, http://www.cfboard.state.mn.us/<> (Follow: *Lobbyist Principal Expenditures-By Expenditure Amount*)

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