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the next step to highlight and give visibility to citizen groups that are actually trying to change things all over the country, and with great ideas. No! They're into their next exposé and denunciation, which are important, but if you don't go to the next step of action, and give visibility to people who are doing things, you produce widespread cynicism and withdrawal from the political and electoral arena.

Because people just say, "Look at these terrible situations. Who can do anything about it? It's so terrible." They never read about people who are trying to do something about it. You have "60 Minutes" exposés, New York Times exposés, and when people try to do something about it, they don't cover them; they go on to their next application for a Pulitzer Prize.

Do you want a comment on the indie press's ignoring of eight days of "Breaking Through Power"? That's the scandal here: There are a lot of press conferences that they should show up for, and they don't show up.

**E.G.:** *Why do you think that is?*

**R.N.:** I think they're lazy. I think they like to mimic the headlines of the day, and give their take on it, and that, of course, brings them completely away from things that are going on that the mass media is ignoring. Basically they're being led by the nose by what the mass media turns into headlines, so if there are a lot of police shootings, they spend a lot of time on that, and if 700 people a day die from mishaps in hospitals and induced infection, negligence, malpractice, it's not in the headlines.

That figure comes from Johns Hopkins University in March 2016 – 700 a day, a *day*, preventable deaths, just in hospitals. Do you listen to Democracy Now!?

**E.G.:** *Yes.*

**R.N.:** Well she's (Amy Goodman) having a hard time resisting that. She has to follow the headlines, and give a progressive take on it. Well that's fine, but if that's all you do, you are not lifting up budding new initiatives and studies and reports and lawsuits that are not in that mass media headline!

**E.G.:** *You mentioned hospital malpractice. What other areas would you like to see more coverage of?*

**R.N.:** The totally inadequate budgets to enforce the law against corporate crime. No law and order for corporate crime, not enough federal cops on the corporate crime beat.

**E.G.:** *How do you think that would be best addressed?*

**R.N.:** Again, that's where the Congress watchdog comes in. They've got to counter the obvious starving of the FDA, EPA, OSHA and other budgets, upgrade the severity of fines, strengthen the laws.

That's a major thing – that destroys far more people than street crime. OSHA: 60,000 workplace-related deaths. EPA: 65,000 from air pollution dead a year. Johns Hopkins: 250,000 people in hospitals, preventable deaths – we're not even talking about the injuries and sicknesses.

And 14,000 street homicides – see the comparisons?

The issue is preventability. They don't

# The little measure that could

*A campaign finance reform plan on the Multnomah County ballot was written to be challenged and force the U.S. Supreme Court to re-examine Citizens United*

**BY EMILY GREEN**  
STAFF WRITER

**O**n Nov. 8, voters in Multnomah County will decide on a ballot measure that could make it possible to reel in runaway political campaign funding nationwide.

While Measure 26-184 is written as a county charter amendment specific to Multnomah County races, it contains provisions capping independent expenditures, which is prohibited under the U.S. Supreme Court Citizens United decision of 2010.

That ruling held that political spending is a form of free speech. It allowed for corporations and unions to begin spending unlimited sums of money on political campaign promotions and attack ads, and it contained loopholes making it difficult to know where dark money flowing into political action committees is coming from.

These unlimited independent expenditures are dollars spent to sway voters one way or another, without any money going directly to a campaign and, therefore, avoiding limits on campaign contributions.

Attorney Dan Meek, who assisted in drafting the measure, explained it was written with the intent of being challenged.

And he expects it will be challenged, both in federal court for the limits it places on independent expenditures – \$5,000 from an individual and \$10,000 from a political committee – and in state court for setting limits on direct campaign contributions in Multnomah County to no more than \$500 from any individual or political committee.

Direct campaign contribution limits are not allowed under Oregon's Constitution, thanks to a 1997 Oregon Supreme Court decision, *VanNatta v. Keisling*, in which the court ruled these limits are a violation of free speech.

Fred VanNatta, of the Center to Protect Free Speech, is expected to bring challenges to the county's measure, should it pass, as he

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talk about that. You can't get them to write anything about the Pentagon budget, unaudited.

If you want a list, go to my website, [votener.org](http://votener.org) (under "Issues" tab), which I kept open since 2008 at some expense, so you can see the issues we were espousing, many of which have majoritarian support, that were taken off the table completely by the Democratic and Republican parties – not even discussible.

**E.G.:** *Are there any people who have jumped out at you, that might be some of the next progressive leaders in our country?*

**R.N.:** Well, you wouldn't know their names, would you?

**E.G.:** *Probably not.*

**R.N.:** So why should I tell you? And I don't know 1 percent of them. There are budding leaders who aren't allowed to turn

into flowers. They don't get on the evening TV news anymore, which is a caricature of itself. Therefore, they don't command an audience. They can't have a news conference and anybody come, because they're not known.

The censorship of any prospect of civic celebrities – local, state and national – is very little discussed.

If I said to you, name me the leading women's rights and civil rights and environmental rights leaders, if you've been around for 40 years or so, you'd name people who are in their 70s and 80s, because they got on TV, they got on "The Phil Donahue Show" – that's 10 million people. They got on "The Mike Douglas Show," Merv Griffin; they would get on the nightly news, the network news – well nobody gets on there anymore. All those programs are gone, and they're replaced

with total junk, masochism, sadism, who did this to who – that's the way they're using our common property, our public airwaves. They're not going deep enough.

**E.G.:** *You mention the need for an audit of the Pentagon's budget. Can you elaborate on why this audit is so important?*

**R.N.:** Yeah, because in the first 10 months of the Iraq War, the Pentagon admitted they couldn't locate \$9 billion worth of money. Because years before that, the Air Force bought billions of dollars of supplies that they had in warehouses around the world, in countries that they didn't know about.

An audit requires more proficient expenditure, or they have to explain why. It reduces cost overruns and corruption within

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