

Coffman Criticizes Democrats' Attempt to Restrict Free Speech

Opposes Bill Rife with Special Interest Exemptions

(WASHINGTON) —Rep. Mike Coffman (R-Aurora) issued the following statement today after opposing H.R. 5175, the Democrats' so-called DISCLOSE Act. The bill is intended to legislatively circumvent the recent *Citizens United v. FEC* Supreme Court decision. It is also a punitive measure that restricts free political speech and will create exemptions for certain Washington special interests:

“After the U.S. Supreme Court decided in January to reject attempts to restrict political speech, Democrats in Congress have created a bill which would legislatively negate the Supreme Court decision and brazenly exempt special interests from their proposed new rules.”

“Make no mistake; this bill is not an honest attempt at meaningful campaign finance reform. It contains massive exemptions for Democrat-supporting unions and special interests. It also poses a direct threat to the First Amendment freedoms afforded by the Constitution. In fact, both the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the American Civil Liberties Union, groups on

opposite ends of the political spectrum, strongly oppose this bill because of the chilling impact it will have on free speech.”

“Democrats have been struggling for weeks to cobble together support for this ill conceived bill by carving out exemption after exemption. They even went so far as to exempt both the National Rifle Association and the Sierra Club from the new requirements, just to garner enough votes for passage. The result of which is a bill that will silence political opponents, unfairly exempt unions and advocacy organizations, and will not increase transparency or improve the existing system.”

“Just as with the new health care law, this is another attempt by the Democrats to enact legislation that suits their own agenda while running roughshod over the Constitution.”

The DISCLOSE Act, introduced by Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chair Rep. Chris Van Hollen, is intended to block organizations from engaging in political debate before the upcoming elections by requiring them to comply with new burdensome disclosure requirements and restrictions.

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