

\$8.2 billion estimated total 2016 federal election spending, according to current trends (1)
31% more than total spending in 2012 (1)

The crisis for democracy isn't that candidates can win simply by spending the most, as proved by Jeb Bush in 2016. It's that more and more money is needed to even get in a race; and once elected, legislators feel more beholden to the wealthy individuals and corporate interests who fund them than to the people they're supposed to represent.

EVIDENCE MOUNTS OF HOW THOROUGHLY BIG MONEY CORRUPTS POLITICS...

Only the few can afford to get in the game. The average cost of winning a Senate seat has increased from \$7.5 million in 2008 to \$10.2 million in 2012. (1) Senators seeking re-election in 2014 had to raise an average of \$3,300 a day for six years to win a seat. (2)

- **A tiny share of us can bankroll campaigns.** Less than one percent of one percent of the U.S. population contributed 60 percent of all the super PAC money spent in the 2012 election cycle. (3) By mid-fall 2015, a mere 158 families and their corporations had already contributed almost half, \$176 million, of early money going to presidential campaigns.
- **The better off are able to bend the rules of the game to their benefit.** The financial industry is now the biggest source of re-election dollars to federal candidates and super PACS. Investment income, for example, is taxed at half the rate of income from working. Following the '08 crash caused by lifting safety-rules on the financial industry, almost all income gains have gone to the top 1 percent. **In contrast, the average American has "near-zero" impact on what legislators decide (4)**

1

AMERICANS ARE REALLY UPSET. THEY WANT A VOICE IN PUBLIC DECISIONS

- 84% of American adults believe that money has too much influence in politics. (5)
- 80% oppose secret or 'dark' money in political contests. (5)
- 85% of us want big changes (with almost half of us wanting a complete rebuild!) in how America funds elections. (6)

2

MOST AMERICANS AGREE ON SOLUTIONS

- 72% of Americans favor small-donor, public-matching funds. (8)
- 78% of us want to reverse the 2010 Supreme Court's Citizen United ruling. (7)

3

WE HAVE PROOF OF WHAT WORKS TO PUT CITIZENS IN CHARGE AND REBUILD TRUST

- In 2015, Seattle residents overwhelmingly voted for public financing, which provides each voter four \$25 vouchers to support candidates of their choice. (11)
- Four years after Arizona implemented public financing, the number of Latino and Native American candidates had nearly tripled compared to the pre-public financing period.
- In Maine, the number of office seekers has doubled since public campaign financing began in 2000. (10)
- With a strong public financing system, the first African American was elected to the NY City Council in 2009. By 2012, people of color became the majority. (9)