

February 20, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, DC

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
H-204, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
S-230, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
S-221, The Capitol  
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader McConnell, and Leader Schumer,

We, the undersigned organizations, representing millions of American citizens nationwide, urge you to reject the so-called “For the People Act,” H.R. 1, which would have a chilling effect on free speech in America and federalize all U.S. elections.

The First Amendment is the hallmark of our republic. The unfettered right of the people to freely criticize their elected representatives is what ensures that U.S. policymaking remains accountable to the American people. Any bill that claims to be “for the people” must recognize this basic American truth.

**H.R. 1 would expose the identities of countless Americans who contribute to nonprofit organizations.** This opens them up to widespread political intimidation and harassment. Brave American patriots set the foundation for our nation writing under the anonymous pen names of Publius and Brutus. They understood the value of anonymity. Members of Congress should not break with this tradition by passing a bill that would have a chilling effect on civic engagement and free speech.

**Another provision of the bill would force sponsors of online political content to file duplicative, burdensome reports with the Federal Election Commission (FEC).** It would further require impractical and inflexible disclaimers on many online ads while also likely regulating organizations’ communications on social media and their own websites. Under such a framework, the only people who could afford to speak would be those with extensive resources and a formidable legal team. This is effectively a free speech deterrent and has no place in our democracy.

The right to vote goes hand in hand with the First Amendment. **H.R. 1 would further undermine the Constitution by broadly defining political “coordination.”** This would effectively ban any and all nonprofits from contacting a member of Congress or their staff about any policy issue. This is a blatant assault on the ability of the people to petition their government.

**Unfortunately, H.R. 1 also seeks to decrease the number of commissioners on the FEC from six to five. This will end the Commission’s long history of being a bipartisan body.** As a partisan body, it

could be used by the party in power to weaponize election laws against political opponents. Such an outcome would decrease public confidence in our elections. This must never be allowed to happen.

This is not the only assault on our election process. **H.R. 1 would essentially nationalize elections and disregard the proper role of states and localities in determining best election practices.** Not every precinct is created equal, and each has different needs to ensure it runs smoothly on election day. A one-size-fits-all fiat from the federal level would ensure chaos on Election Day and prevent many voters from having their voices heard.

H.R. 1 includes a provision that would provide candidates with a 6-to-1 taxpayer-funded subsidy for small-dollar campaign contributions. **This means that taxpayers – Republicans and Democrats alike – will be forced to subsidize political campaign literature and ads with which they disagree.** This could mean Democrats funding pro-Second Amendment campaign ads through their tax dollars or Republicans paying for pro-abortion ads.

**There is also a provision in H.R. 1 that would allow federal bureaucrats to monitor polling places and receive payment for doing so.** Federal employees, who inherently have a stake in the outcomes of elections, have no business monitoring polling places in such close proximity to thousands of voters. This is a thinly veiled form of voter intimidation.

**Our nation is only a few years removed from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) targeting scores of Americans for their political beliefs. H.R. 1 lifts the policy rider that banned the IRS from codifying such targeting practices into law.** The lesson from that scandal was to stop political targeting, not to encourage it.

Revealing the identities of donors and increasing the federal role in our election process are also not lessons to be learned from that scandal. As lawmakers who have taken an oath to preserve and protect the Constitution, we urge you to promote legislation that champions free speech, not legislation that severely limits it. **This is why we, on behalf of the activists and voters we represent, ask you to oppose H.R. 1.**

Sincerely,

Adam Brandon  
President  
FreedomWorks

Pete Sepp  
President  
National Taxpayers Union

David McIntosh  
President  
Club for Growth

Grover Norquist  
President  
Americans for Tax Reform

Tim Chapman  
Executive Director  
Heritage Action

Jonathan Bydlak  
President  
Coalition to Reduce Spending

Nathan Nascimento  
Executive Vice President  
Freedom Partners Chamber of Commerce

Daniel Garza  
President  
The LIBRE Initiative

Tom Schatz  
President  
Council for Citizens Against Government Waste

Patrick Purtill  
Director of Legislative Affairs  
Faith and Freedom Coalition

Jeff Mazzella  
President  
Center for Individual Freedom

Jenny Beth Martin  
Honorary Chairman  
Tea Party Patriots Action

Phil Kerpen  
President  
American Commitment

Seton Motley  
President  
Less Government

James L. Martin  
Founder/Chairman  
60 Plus Association

Mario H. Lopez  
President  
Hispanic Leadership Fund

Brent Gardner  
Chief Government Affairs Officer  
Americans for Prosperity

Dan Caldwell  
Executive Director  
Concerned Veterans for America

Lisa B. Nelson  
CEO  
ALEC Action

David Bozell  
President  
ForAmerica

Matt Kibbe  
President  
Free the People

Bob Barr  
Chairman  
Liberty Guard

David Williams  
President  
Taxpayers Protection Alliance

Andrew Langer  
President  
Institute for Liberty

Saul Anuzis  
President  
60 Plus Association

Norm Singleton  
President  
Campaign for Liberty

Ryan Ellis  
President  
Center for a Free Economy

Victor Riches  
President  
Goldwater Institute

James Bopp, Jr.  
General Counsel  
James Madison Center for Free Speech

Matt Kandrach  
President  
Consumer Action for a Strong Economy

Annette Meeks  
CEO  
Freedom Foundation of Minnesota

Heather Lauer  
Policy Director  
People United for Privacy

Judson Phillips  
President  
Tea Party Nation

Tom McCabe  
CEO  
Freedom Foundation

Dudley Brown  
President  
National Association for Gun Rights

Jameson Taylor  
Vice President of Policy  
Mississippi Center for Public Policy