

H.R. 1 and S. 1 “For the People Act” Cancels Free Speech and Private Giving

America’s great tradition of free speech is under attack. H.R. 1 and S. 1, the deceptively named “For the People Act,” not only undermine states’ ability to reform their election processes, these measures also squelch speech by requiring nonprofits that communicate about issues to disclose their donors. The sweeping changes target the vibrant network of conservative organizations by exposing their donors so they can be harassed and intimidated in a brazen attempt to silence speech.

The following components of the “For the People Act” would devastate the right-of-center movement:

DISCLOSE Act

The DISCLOSE Act will expand the definition of political speech subject to complex government regulation. It also will trigger significant donor disclosure requirements for organizations that spend more than \$10,000 on ads about policy issues that merely mention a candidate, even if the communication has nothing to do with an election. Groups, including charities, that grant more than \$10,000 to another organization that then spends money discussing policy issues also will have to disclose their donors. **This aggressive mandate violates Americans’ privacy, facilitates harassment, and will decrease civic engagement.**

Honest Ads Act

The Honest Ads Act erodes the Federal Election Commission’s “internet exemption” that has allowed online speech to flourish. Mentioning a federal candidate or elected official in an online communication will trigger complex disclaimer and reporting requirements, effectively rendering some common online ads impossible. **Small organizations with limited resources to consult attorneys before communicating online will be squeezed out of the public square.**

Voters Support Private Giving

70 percent of voters believe that no one has a right to know which non-political organizations someone supports.

Stand by Every Ad Act

Video and audio ads paid for by nonprofits, including communications on the internet, would have to identify each of the organization’s top five donors giving \$10,000 or more, even if those donors only gave general support. This means each listed donor would be publicly identified for sponsoring an ad that they may have no knowledge of with a message that they may oppose. **This invasion of privacy will mislead the public, make it more difficult for groups to speak, and dangerously expose citizens to public scrutiny.**

Secret Money Transparency Act

The Internal Revenue Service is currently barred from issuing regulations that govern speech and citizen advocacy by nonprofit organizations after being caught systematically harassing right-of-center groups. This bill seeks to repeal that prohibition. **Eliminating this safeguard would weaponize the IRS to become the “speech police.”** It would also reverse recent reforms that eliminated the requirement that certain nonprofits report the confidential information of their supporters — information the IRS does not need to enforce tax law.

For more information visit:

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