



DOLLARS VS. DEMOCRACY: CORPORATIONS AND THE ATTACK ON VOTING RIGHTS AND PEACEFUL PROTEST

GREENPEACE

REPORT SUMMARY

Dollars vs. Democracy is a new report from Greenpeace Inc., about how corporations contribute to the attacks on our freedom to vote and silence our right to dissent. Actions speak louder than words. Even though a growing number of companies have spoken out in defense of democracy and voting rights, many of these same companies contributed to legislators sponsoring anti-voter or anti-protest bills during their most recent election campaigns. Of the [100 companies who endorsed the April 14 “We Stand for Democracy,”](#) statement opposing “any discriminatory legislation or measures that restrict or prevent any eligible voter from having an equal and fair opportunity to cast a ballot,” 12 contributed to the sponsors of 43 anti-voter bills analyzed. The report also found that five of the 10 companies that donated most to sponsors of state anti-voter legislation also rank among the top 10 corporate donors to sponsors of anti-protest bills.

Similarly, in the wake of the white supremacist attack on the Capitol, at least 130 companies “paused” Political Action Committee (PAC) contributions to members of the “insurrection caucus.” But, at least 47 of these companies contributed to the sponsors of anti-voter legislation introduced since the January 6th insurrection. The stakes for our democracy are too high for anyone to remain on the sidelines. A healthy democracy is a precondition for a healthy environment which means these attacks must stop and the voices of the people, not corporate polluters, should be heard. **When everyone’s vote counts and when everyone’s constitutionally guaranteed right to peacefully protest is protected, our government becomes more accountable.** *Dollars vs. Democracy* explores these dynamics and gives the reader some key insight into how we can build people-power in the fight for our planet.

HOW THIS IMPACTS THE PLANET

In reaction to key social movements like Ferguson and Standing Rock, the fossil fuel industry, and the elected officials it funds, have been looking for ways to criminalize protest, **especially peaceful protest that works to stop toxic pipelines**. Because it is afraid of our people-power, the fossil fuel industry is pushing legislation to silence us and criminalize our right to dissent. These tactics are especially used against Black, Brown, and Indigenous people protecting their communities. But, we know we must and will win. **“Big oil” is actually not as big as it seems**. It is a dying industry resorting to failing tactics.

Making our democracy work -- making it inclusive and accountable and fair -- is the single most important thing we can do to advance solutions on climate and so much more. **This is our moment to wrest back control of our fossil fuel money saturated democracy and put it into the hands of real people, for the people**. The stakes could not be higher. Fossil fuel pollution is accumulating in the atmosphere -- like a heat-trapping blanket around the earth -- to such a level that we're nearing tipping points after which it will be virtually impossible to prevent worst-case scenarios.

We only have a handful of years left to reduce the power of fossil fuel companies polluting our communities, our climate, and our democratic systems before we will rocket past climate thresholds and find ourselves at a catastrophic point of no return -- unless we first fix our broken democracy. We cannot effectively and equitably address these crises in a democracy that excludes the most impacted communities.

KEY FINDINGS

- *44 state legislators have sponsored both anti-voter and anti-protest bills.*
- *Of the top 100 corporations contributing to anti-voter bill sponsors, 53 are also among the top 100 corporate contributors to anti-protest bill sponsors.*
- *Even though a growing number of companies have spoken out in defense of democracy and voting rights, many of these same companies contributed to legislators sponsoring anti-voter or anti-protest bills during their most recent election campaigns.*
- *The U.S. Chamber of Commerce opposes the For The People Act (H.R. 1/S. 1), despite the fact that many individual member companies oppose anti-voter legislation.*

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The same communities facing the worst impacts of pollution and poverty are also the targets of voter suppression and the criminalization of nonviolent protest. Ultimately,

these injustices often perpetrated against Black, Brown, and Indigenous peoples, affect our entire society. Injustices so large cannot be ignored, even by those in the most powerful perches of privilege.

Congress is currently presented with the opportunity to pass two bills that would restore, strengthen, and protect our freedom to vote, making sure our voices are heard by preventing billionaires from buying our elections, and ensuring we can elect leaders who govern in our interests by enacting: **For The People Act (H.R. 1/S. 1) and The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (H.R. 4)**. It is now more urgent than ever to build a just transition away from fossil fuels AND fight off these attacks against protest **so that we can have a planet our communities can thrive on.**

Corporations must support strong national standards for voting rights and election reform.

- *Publicly support the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (H.R. 4).*
- *Join the overwhelming majority of Americans across the political spectrum who support the For The People Act (H.R. 1/S. 1) by publicly pledging their support for the bill.*

Corporations must stop funding politicians who sponsor or vote for anti-voter legislation and anti-protest legislation.

- *Companies must withhold and ultimately end all forms of direct or indirect political spending for lawmakers who introduce, sponsor, or vote for legislation designed to restrict people's basic freedom to vote and right to dissent.*

Corporations must defend the right to dissent.

- *Corporations must recognize the important role peaceful protesting plays in advancing democracy and take the following actions:*
- *Stop supporting the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) along with state and regional affiliates of the Chamber of Commerce, so long as they support anti-protest legislation.*
- *Stop doing business with companies that lobby for anti-protest legislation.*
- *Withdraw support for any police association or groups that lobby for anti-protest legislation.*

Additional key findings and recommendations will be available in the full report. Keep on the lookout for a link to it soon!