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February 28, 2002

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Dear Senator:

On behalf of the nearly one million members and supporters of the American Conservative Union, and the millions more represented by those groups who have co-signed this letter, I am writing to urge you to vote against the ill-conceived, unconstitutional Shays-Meehan Campaign Finance "Reform" bill, recently passed by the House.

As we have said all along, this is not a vote about politics, but a vote about principle. By voting NO, you will take the side of freedom and honor your oath to support and defend the U.S. Constitution. It is a shame that so many of your colleagues on both sides of the aisle seem ambivalent toward this fact, as did so many in the House.

Much of the debate over this legislation has focused on which party will be helped or hurt by its various provisions, with very few commentators addressing the core questions of whether or not the sorts of restrictions on political speech envisioned by the bill's authors are either wise or constitutional. We don't know which party will ultimately benefit or be hurt by this legislation and what's more, we don't care.

The bill you will be voting on redefines political speech and outlaws or criminalizes speech that every American has always thought protected by the First Amendment to our Constitution. Looked at from our perspective, you are about to be asked to vote on a bill that tells those who might want to criticize your actions in the future to just shut up.

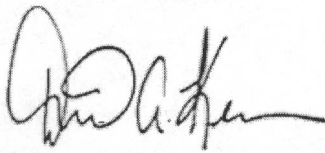
That's perhaps something elected officials like you may want to be able to do, but seizing and exercising the power to do so and make it stick is just about the most anti-democratic act we can imagine you taking. So before you vote on this legislation, do yourself a favor. Think not about who will have a fundraising edge if the bill passes, but about what you will really be voting on -- the most significant legislative attempt to restrict First Amendment rights that has ever come this close to becoming law.

The folks who put this monstrosity together know that much of it is likely to be declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. That's why they insist that regardless of what the courts strike down, the rest of it should be allowed to go into effect. Their position is as simple as it is cynical -- prejudging the constitutionality of the legislation on which you vote is not your job. In that, they are dead, flat wrong.

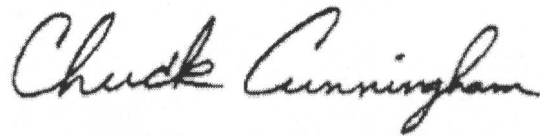
Every Senator takes an oath to support and defend the Constitution. Voting for legislation that you believe inconsistent with the Constitution would violate that oath. Don't do that.

If you can honestly say you believe the restrictions on the very political speech that is at the core of what the founders wanted to protect when they adopted the First Amendment will be found constitutional, ignore this letter. But if you believe they won't pass muster by a court that actually believes in free speech, do everyone a favor by voting against it. Don't make the courts do your job.

Yours Sincerely,



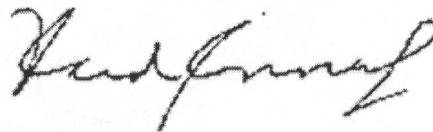
David A. Keene
Chairman



Charles H. Cunningham
NRA - ILA



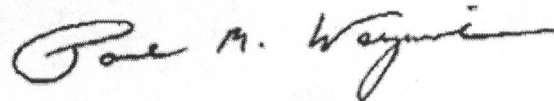
Lt. Col. Oliver L. North
Honorary Chairman, Freedom Alliance



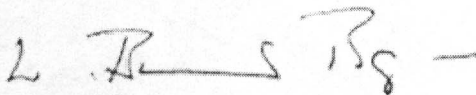
Ward Connerly



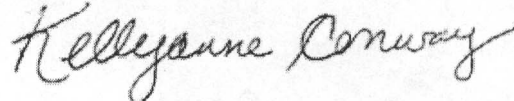
Grover Norquist
Americans for Tax Reform



Paul M. Weyrich
Coalitions for America



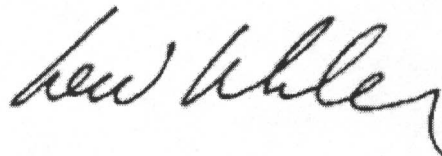
L. Brent Bozell
Conservative Victory Company



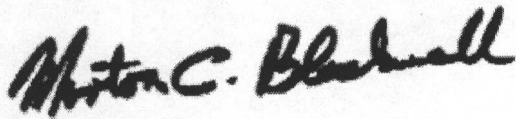
Kellyanne Conway
The Polling Company / Woman Trend



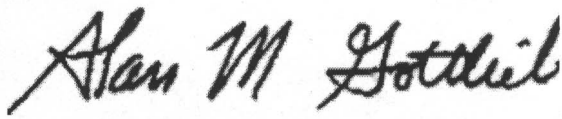
Craig Shirley
Craig Shirley & Associates



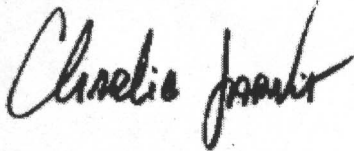
Lewis K. Uhler
National Tax Limitation Committee



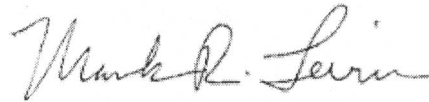
Morton Blackwell
Conservative Leadership PAC



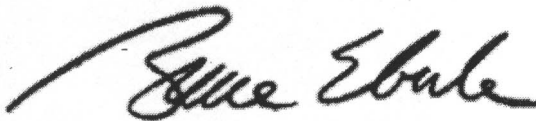
Alan M. Gottlieb
Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms



Charles W. Jarvis
United Seniors Association



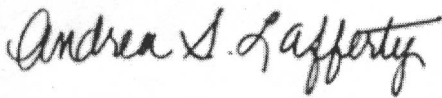
Mark R. Levin
Landmark Legal Foundation



Bruce W. Eberle
Eberle Communications Group



Jim Martin
60 Plus Association



Andrea Lafferty
Traditional Values Coalition



Ken Connor
Family Research Council



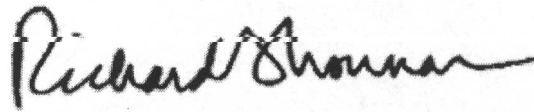
Cleta Mitchell
Attorney, Washington D.C.



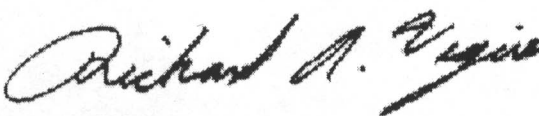
John Berthoud
National Taxpayers Union



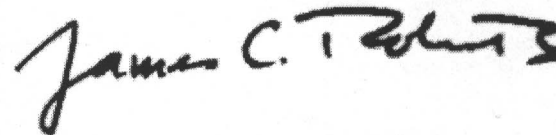
David Keating
Club for Growth Advocacy



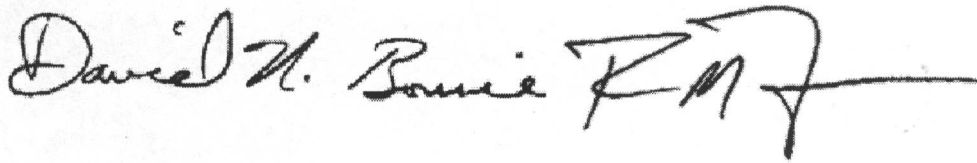
Richard Norman
The Richard Norman Company



Richard A. Viguerie
ConservativeHQ.com


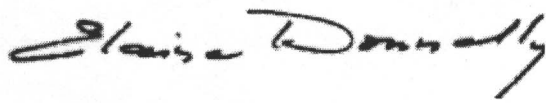


James C. Roberts
American Studies Center



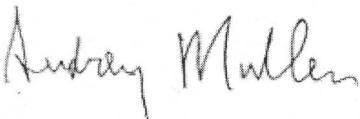
David M. Bossie
Citizens United

Robert Funk
American Shareholders Association

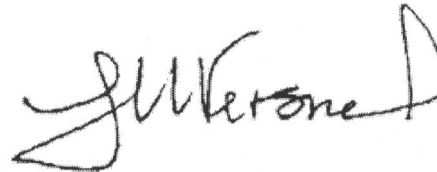


Elaine Donnelly
Center for Military Readiness

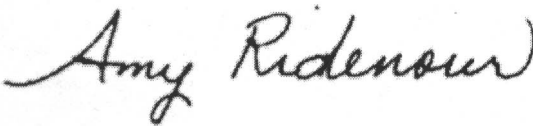
Chuck Muth
Republican Liberty Caucus



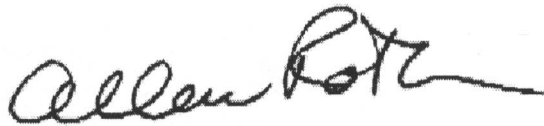
Audrey Mullen
Patriot PAC



Julie Versnel
American Political Action Committee



Amy Ridenour
The National Center for Public Policy Research*

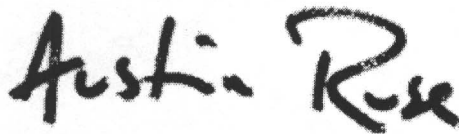


Allen Roth
New York State Conservative Party



Marc Levin
Young Conservatives of Texas

David B. Kopel
Columnist, National Review Online*



Austin Ruse
Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute*



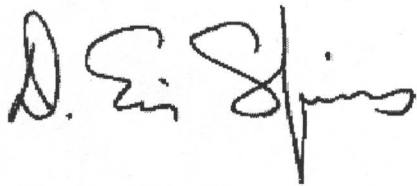
Shaun Marie Levine
Executive Director, Conservative Party of New York



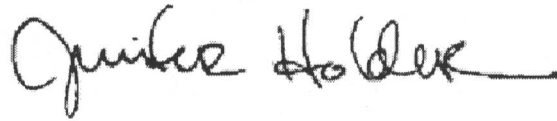
Edwin Moore
James Madison Institute*



Steve Baldwin
CNP Action, Inc.



D. Eric Schippers
Center for Individual Freedom



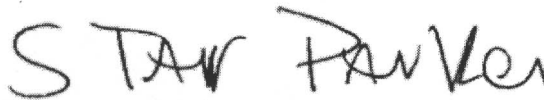
Jennifer Holder
NoInternetTax.org



Charles W. Baird
Director, The Smith Center



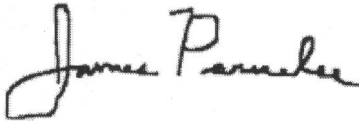
Joan L. Hueter
American Council for Immigration Reform



Star Parker
Coalition on Urban Renewal & Education



Jake Haulk
Allegheny Institute for Public Policy*



James Parmelee
Republicans United for Tax Relief



Paul Beckner
Citizens for a Sound Economy



Brandon Dutcher
Oklahoma Council for Public Affairs*



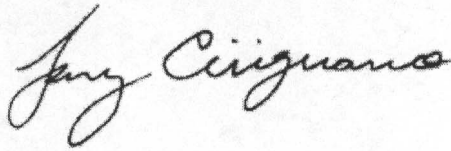
John Taylor
Virginia Institute of Public Policy*



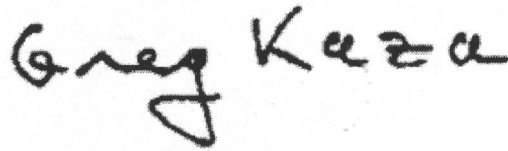
Farha Ahmed
Muslim American Republican Caucus



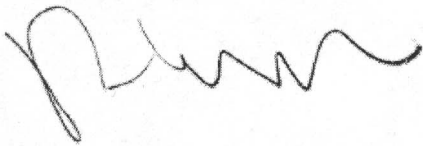
Gary Jarmin
Christian Voice



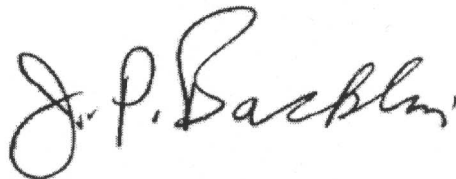
Larry Cirigano
CatholicVote.org



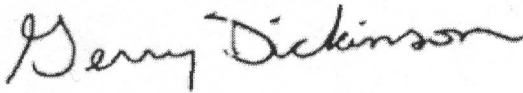
Greg Kaza
Arkansas Policy Foundation*



Richard Falknor
Maryland Taxpayers Association



J.P. Backlin
Legislative Director, Christian Coalition



Gerry Dickinson
South Carolina Policy Council Education
Foundation*



Larry Pratt
Gun Owners of America

*** = Organization listed for identification purposes only.**

P.S. – We have included below the text of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which you may wish to review prior to casting your vote.

Amendment I to the U.S. Constitution:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”