

BGDA Case Competition

That we should have fully publicly funded elections (all campaigning funds provided by the government)

Context

All around the world, we witness a plutocratic perversion of democracy, rotting through electoral systems. The ultra-rich, special interest groups and SuperPACS, are able to subvert voting systems and override the will of the people with their own profiteering interests. Mining companies will continue to plunder the earth with impunity, until we ban them from donating tens of millions to candidates who when in office oppose any and all environmental regulation. Pharmaceutical companies will continue to price diabetic children out of their right to life, until politicians actually become accountable to their own constituents. That is why we must have fully publicly funded elections.

1) Model

- Ban all private funding schemes, such as SuperPACS
- There will be a universal amount of funding allocated to candidates.
- The amount of funding will depend on the size of the race (presidential, municipal)
- Candidates will be prohibited from using any of their own capital to fund campaigns.

To win this debate we must prove that we create a world in which politicians are more accountable to the public than they are to their private donors and that through this accountability individuals can meaningfully exercise their right to vote.

Substantive

1.1 Democratic imperative for Public funding

- Inherent to the system of democracy is the notion that all people deserve *equal* political representation.
 - Private funding allows wealthy individuals to access levels of political influence which are incommensurate to their actual numbers in the population.
 - This is wrong simply by way of the fact that this is the exact antithesis of the equitable way in which democracy is meant to work and...
1. Wealthy people are not dependent upon governmental systems for their security and subsistence in the way that poorer individuals are. Some people literally can't survive without welfare.
 - egregious that the least vulnerable people in our society have increased access to democratic representation.

2. Special interest religious groups

When religious fundamentalists pour huge amounts of capital into 'preserving the sanctity of marriage' or being 'pro-life', they erode the important delineation between church and state, using their wealth as an instrument to do so.

- At the point at which the democratic system preferences one faith over another, that infringes on the religious freedoms of every other person who does not subscribe to that religion.

1.2 Better political representation

Private funding disallows good representation, as individuals who are unwilling to make concessions to their policies in exchange for corporate support, are unable to campaign against those with vast wealth.

In the absence of external coercion, the policies of political candidates are likely to be far better.

1. Firstly, the interests of everyday voters and those of large corporations are diametrically opposed.
 - Solving issues such as wealth inequality or campaigning to increase the minimum wage directly infringes on the profitability of these companies whose only real obligation is to their shareholders. So, they are unlikely to support policies in the public's interest.

Therefore, when politicians accept money from these industries, they jettison their capacity to implement laws which actually protect their constituents.

2. Secondly, it forces politicians to lie and be purposefully evasive about their policy aims. For example, saying you're going to implement good environmental policy and then giving mining companies free range to frack your whole community.
 - Hinders the ability of voters' right to representation. When politicians conceal their corporatist agendas with platitudes which imply they would do the exact opposite of what they end up doing, it precludes voters from any meaningful democratic participation.
3. Thirdly, candidates without donors, are immensely disadvantaged in the current system.
 - The ability to even relocate yourself to Canberra or maintain your campaign in its most embryonic stages when no one really knows who you are, is expensive.
 - The problem with private campaign finance, is that you make wealth the determinative factor in electoral success.
 - The impact of this prohibitive status quo, is that individuals who have an actual understanding of the struggles of working-class people, are not able to ascend to

the positions of power in which they can actualise change; they can either sell out, or not run at all.

Given the analysis we just gave about why candidates without donors are likely to much better, the harm of them being barred from running should weigh heavily in this debate, as they are the most likely to enact policy which helps the over-whelming majority of people.

2.1 Private funding disenfranchises voters

When voters know that both parties in a presidential election are funded by large corporations who are prescribed to act in the interest of their shareholders above all else, the practice of voting becomes obsolete. You engender a large degree of voter apathy when you force the public to choose the lesser of two evils. In the [2016 US election 45% of eligible voters stayed home](#).

- This disillusionment is bad because it
 - a) Never goes away (the narrative of corrupt politicians makes you incrementally less trusting and less likely to vote even if a good candidate comes along)
 - b) When people stop voting, democracy becomes unrepresentative and therefore invalid.

2.2 Private funding promulgates wealth inequality

While industries may have niche regulatory interests (mining permissions, or funding for pharmaceutical research), they are coerced by their desire for wealth accumulation. This means blocking laws that increase taxes on the wealthy and demand a living wages for workers.

- The comparative on our side is that these lawmakers are precluded from taking money from big business and industries, which allows them to pass laws that increase the quality of life for the working-class.
- Giving people more money allows them to upskill, to get a car, to move to a better school district, all empowering ways of achieving the social mobility which they are owed.

Pre-emptive Rebuttal

'Just because a political candidate takes money from a donor, does not mean they are obliged to enact policy in that organisation's interest.'

1. Politicians who have the incentive of re-election will implement these policies.
2. Wealthy corporations can simply back your political adversary with their enormous wealth if you decide to dissent, so the outcome will be the same.
3. On the comparative there is a far greater chance they do not act in the interest of corporations when you ban all private campaign funding.

'Organisations campaigning for social change e.g. the LGBTQI movement or BLM, should have the ability to campaign for change through donations.'

1. they are not wealthy groups, poorer African American communities which are more likely to be subject to predatory policing, are not wealthy enough to form a SuperPAC.
2. These people are benefited when you rid governments of corrupt politicians e.g. Actually, regulating police brutality because officials aren't scared of their police donors.

3. Comparatively institutions who are wealthy like the catholic church, and the police union, are advantaged by a system which allows them to utilise their immense wealth and further entrench their power.

Note at the end of this speech, we were the side which made political access fair and equal, we allowed the government to protect its vulnerable constituents.