

| | T99 | | | T76 | | |
|--|-------------------------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Anchor | ~ | Common | Anchor | ~ | Common |
| | bracero | campaign | campaign | thing | thing | just |
| | shaysmeehan | candid | candid | realli | just | us |
| | election | soft | money | got | realli | thing |
| | mccainfeingold | bracero | contribut | guess | happen | let |
| | flier | shaysmeehan | financ | bit | let | take |
| | buckley | ad | elect | happen | look | happen |
| | tamraz | financ | parti | littl | kind | look |
| | neywynn | contribut | ad | guy | littl | realli |
| | russ | parti | reform | kind | us | way |
| | getoutthevot | elect | soft | okay | got | countri |
| | mccainfeingoldshaysmeel | reform | polit | tell | tell | kind |
| | valeo | money | law | oh | take | littl |
| | campaignrel | unlimit | limit | just | way | give |
| | feeder | influenc | court | absolut | give | good |
| | leif | fec | system | let | start | tell |
| | mccarran | election | bracero | went | went | call |
| | speakingand | shay | feder | look | countri | even |
| | masquerad | buckley | group | big | bit | got |
| | cfr | mccainfeingold | influenc | folk | good | start |
| | officehold | polit | time | start | guess | went |

1

Mr. President, I want to add my voice to the many this morning who have spoken with some relief and satisfaction

mr presid want add voic mani morn spoken relief satisfact

2

and confidence about the outcome of the vote. There are many who can take credit for the success we are about to

confid outcom vote mani can take credit success

3

experience, but none more than the colleague who is sitting to my left, Senator Feingold. He and Senator McCain

experi none colleagu sit left senat feingold senat mccain

4

have been extraordinary in their persistence and their willingness to negotiate, to compromise but yet to hold fast to

extraordinari persist willing negoti compromis yet hold fast

5

the principles that make this legislation worthy of its passage and historic in its nature. We are concluding one of

principl make legisl worthi passag histor natur conclud one

6

the most important debates we will have had in this Congress. Thomas Paine, the famed revolutionary, once

import debat will congress thoma pain fame revolutionari

7

offered an explanation for why corrupt systems often last so long. He said: That is certainly true of the way we pay

offer explan corrupt system often last long said certain true way pay

8

for campaigns in this country. Our reliance on special interest money to run political campaigns is such an old

campaign countri relianc special interest money run polit campaign old

9

habit that for a long time it had the superficial appearance of being right. But not anymore. The American people

habit long time superfici appear right anymor american peopl

10

understand that special interest money too often influences who runs, who wins, and how they govern. While there

understand special interest money often influenc run win govern

11

is still a vocal minority who deny it, a clear majority of this Congress and an overwhelming majority of the

still vocal minor deni clear major congress overwhelm major

12

American people know our current campaign finance system is broken. Now is the time to fix it. Almost 1 year

american peopl know current campaign financ system broken now time fix almost year

13

ago, the Senate passed the McCain–Feingold campaign finance reform bill. At the time, we had 2 solid weeks of

ago senat pass mccainfeingold campaign financ reform bill time solid week

14

debate and we passed a good, strong bill. Opponents of reform in the House used every argument and excuse,

debat pass good strong bill oppon reform hous use everi argument excus

15

every imaginable ploy, to stop the bill from becoming law. For a while, it looked as if they had won, but 1 month

everi imagin ploy stop bill becom law look won month

16

ago the reformers turned the tide. The House passed the Shays–Meehan bill, and the President has indicated he will

ago reform turn tide hous pass shaysmeehan bill presid indic will

17

sign it. Now it falls to the Senate, which started this process, to finish it, and today with this vote we will. I am a

sign now fall senat start process finish today vote will

18

realist. I know this bill does not address every flaw in our system, and I know there are those who are already

realist know bill address everi flaw system know already

19

looking for ways to work around this bill. But as Senator Feingold has often said, it does show the public we

look way work around bill senat feingold often said show public

20

understand the current system does not do our democracy justice. It curbs some of the most egregious injustices. It

understand current system democraci justic curb egregi injustic

21

bans soft money, the unlimited, unregulated contributions to political parties. It curbs issue ads, those special

ban soft money unlimit unregul contribut polit parti curb issu ad special

22

interest ads that clearly target particular candidates in an attempt to influence the outcome of an election. It calls

interest ad clear target particularcandid attempt influenc outcom elect call

23

for greater disclosure and increases penalties for violation of the law. Often those who are the loudest and decry

greaterdisclosur increas penalti violat law often loudest decri

24

the abuses of our current system are the staunchest defenders of that system. If you really are outraged by the

abus current system staunchest defend system realli outrag

25

abuses, you need to fix the system that invites them. If you want to fix the system, now is the time to do it. There

abus need fix system invit want fix system now time

26

are those who have argued and will continue to argue that in an attempt to make things better we will only make

argu will continu argu attempt make thing better will make

27

things worse. But since its founding, the goal of America has been to strive for that more perfect union our

thing wors sinc found goal america strive perfect union

28

Founders envisioned. To say we should not attempt to make things better begs the question: “Is what we have

founder envis say attempt make thing better beg question

29

now good enough?” Is it “good enough” that half of the government has to recuse itself from an investigation of a

now good enough good enough half govern recus investig

30

failed company because it spread around so much money to those who were involved, to so many people in that

fail compani spread around much money involv mani peopl

31

community? Is it “good enough” that in every election the amount of money spent goes up and the number of

communiti good enough everi elect amount money spent goe number

32

people voting goes down? Is it “good enough” that the current system is more loophole than law? If we look at the

peopl vote goe good enough current system loophol law look

33

rising tide of money in politics, the influence that money buys and the corrosive effect it has on people's faith in

rise tide money polit influenc money buy corros effect peopl faith

34

government, the answer, then, is clearly no. Ours is a government “of the people, by the people, and for the

govern answer clear govern peopl peopl

35

people." It is not a government of, by, and for some of the people. With this vote, we stand on the verge of putting

peopl govern peopl vote stand verg put

36

the reigns of government back into the hands of all people. We owe that in large measure to the stewardship and

reign govern back hand peopl owe larg measur stewardship

37

commitment of our colleagues, Senators McCain and Feingold. Time and again, they have refused to compromise

commit colleagu senat mccain feingold time refus compromis

38

their principles in the face of incredible pressure, but time and again they have acted in the national interest rather

principl face incred pressur time act nation interest rather

39

than their respective partisan interests. So I thank them for their service to our Republic and to the Senate. It has

respect partisan interest thank servic republ senat

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taken us a long time to get to this point. The last time Congress strengthened our political system by loosening the

taken us long time get point last time congress strengthen polit system loosen

41

grip of special interest money was 1974, more than a generation ago. Congress may not have another chance to

grip special interest money generat ago congress may anoth chanc

42

pass real campaign reform for yet another generation, long after most of us will have left. Passing this bill will

pass real campaign reform yet anoth generat long us will left pass bill will

43

likely have a profound impact on each of us for the rest of our time here, and none of us can be absolutely sure

like profound impact us rest time none us can absolut sure

44

what that impact will be. But we know this: The status quo is not acceptable and today it will end. The currency of

impact will know status quo accept today will end currenc

45

politics should be ideas, not dollars. It is time for us to start putting the currency back into circulation. After years

polit idea dollar time us start put currenc back circul year

46

of debate and months of delay, let us do this one final thing. Let us take the power away from special interests and

debat month delay let us one final thing let us take power away special interest

47

give it back today to the American people where it belongs. We can do that today. The time is now. I yield the

give back today american peopl belong can today time now yield

48

floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

floor suggest absenc quorum