Mr. Speaker, with the passage of H.R. 359, House Republicans voted today to give corporations and other special interests even more power to influence America's elections. I strongly oppose this legislation and will continue working to restore transparency and balance to our country's broken campaign finance system.

H.R. 359 terminates the Presidential Election Campaign Fund, which was created in response to the campaign corruption exposed by the Watergate Scandal. The voluntary PECF allows taxpayers to set aside $3.00 of their federal taxes so that eligible candidates spend less time fundraising from special interests. H.R. 359 eliminates an important option citizens now have to support fair federal elections and takes another, worrisome toward corporate control of U.S. elections.

Many non-partisan organizations strongly oppose H.R. 359 and are raising alarm about the consequences of its passage. The *League of Women Voters* said the Presidential Election Campaign Fund "has substantially reduced corruption and the appearance of corruption in the executive branch" since its creation, and "has given average citizens and small donors a critically important role to play in funding presidential campaigns and provided more meaningful choices to voters." Minnesotans agree. My home state has one of the most successful public campaign finance models in the nation, one that has provided real incentives toward limiting campaign spending. The bill before us today is a direct contradiction of Minnesota values, and I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

H.R. 359 is the second major assault on free and fair elections in the past year. The U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* declared corporations have the same free speech protections granted to individuals. I completely disagree with the Court's decision, but the result of this decision is now clear - the floodgates are open to waves of special interest money in federal elections. The few protections that existed in law have been removed. In response, Democrats in Congress introduced the *DISCLOSE Act* to ensure Americans knew who was paying to influence their vote and to prevent foreign corporations and governments from funding U.S. elections. I voted for the *DISCLOSE Act* (H.R. 5175) when it passed the Democratic-led House in 2010. Unfortunately, Republicans in the Senate blocked the DISCLOSE Act from passage.

America's elections are for the American people. Unregulated corporate spending and new barriers to citizen-contributions will lead to more of the negative campaign ads and less citizen inspired democracy. I strongly disagree with the drive to corporatize America's elections which is an obvious priority for my Republican colleagues. It is fundamentally anti-democratic to fight to protect corporations' right to free speech while voting to prevent citizens from making their voices heard in the political process.