

THE  National Association of
NAFSL NEWSLETTER
Former State Legislators

Balanced Federalism ★ State Sovereignty ★ Representative Governance

October 2022

Volume 2, Number 10

Welcome to our October newsletter. We are excited to share with former Florida state legislators a unique opportunity they now have to support an historic state landmark. Also, as we head into Election Day, we have a story from an NAFSL member and former state senator from New Hampshire about an urgent matter and solution concerning campaign finance laws.



Former Florida state legislators now have a specialty license plate that they can purchase. Proceeds go to support the Florida Historic Capitol Museum. For more information call the Office of Legislative Affairs at DHSMV: 850-617-3195.

Submitted by Jim Rubens:

The founders of our nation were most fearful of concentrated political power and the corruption and tyranny that, history has shown, inevitably follows. For that reason, the Constitution structures our government in multiple ways to divide and check power. Federalism and the Tenth Amendment -- reserving unenumerated powers to the states and people -- is central among these protections.

Federalism, our protection against a remote one-size-fits-all government, guarantees respect for local preferences, provides political space to test and replicate successful policies, and allows us to live together as one strong nation despite our disagreements.

Today, federalism is under attack by a new aristocracy of billionaires, big corporations, unions, and power bosses from New York, California and Washington, DC. These power brokers fund and control the billions in out-of-state campaign money that is flooding into swing state and swing district elections nationwide. The sums involved are large enough to determine which candidates are viable and what issues get media attention.

Locally funded, grassroots candidates are drowned out under months of wall-to-wall attack ads and are simply losing control over their own campaigns. As every swing election becomes nationalized, important local and state priorities are being submerged. Consequently, what remains of federalism and our Tenth Amendment protections is in jeopardy.

This unchecked campaign money system is a recent phenomenon, unleashed by a wave of Supreme Court decisions that have stripped our state legislators and Congress of almost any power over campaign money, other than that given directly to candidates. As a result, most campaign money is now "dark", a dangerously large, but unknown amount of it coming from foreign sources. This "dark" money is channeled through SuperPACs without contribution or spending limits, and it is controlled by a tiny number of individuals associated with each party.

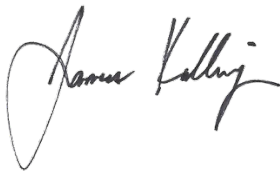
American federalism means "a proper respect for state functions, a recognition of the fact that the entire country is made up of a Union of separate State governments, and a continuance of the belief that the National Government will fare best if the States and their institutions are left free to perform their separate functions in their separate ways." U.S. Supreme Court Justice Hugo L. Black

The only real solution to this aristocrat-controlled campaign money system would be to amend the U.S. Constitution. An amendment that would grant state legislators the authority to enact campaign finance laws suited to their own state, restore Congressional power to protect the free speech rights of all Americans, and shut off the national security threat posed by foreign money in U.S. elections.

The [For Our Freedom Amendment](#) gives state legislators the power to write their own campaign finance laws, but dictates nothing, leaving the legislating to legislators. A supermajority of voters supports this amendment. Twenty-two states have already adopted resolutions urging Congress to draft this amendment for state ratification. Unfortunately, Congress will not move until more states are united on this front.

It is the fundamental constitutional protections that preserve our freedom and our First Amendment right to influence the outcome of elections in our own states that compels the need for the *For Our Freedom Amendment*.

Jim Rubens is an [American Promise](#) board member, former New Hampshire state senator, and member of NAFSL.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Kallinger". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

James Kallinger, President
National Association of Former State Legislators