

Courts are not for sale



Campaign cash undermines confidence in the courts

Special interests spending at record highs

Increasingly in the United States, special interest groups are pouring millions of dollars into judicial campaigns in a way that threatens the cornerstone of democracy.

The Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law as well as other legal scholars, report an “explosion” of private money pouring into state judicial elections in recent years, often cloaked in the anonymity of a large organizations, or by special interest groups better known for their partisan alliances.



Judicial races are increasingly marked by noisy, misleading advertising or groups that pressure judicial candidates to tell how they might rule in the future. One Brennan Center report concludes “many Americans have come to believe that justice is for sale.” It is a concern that is spreading across the legal community.

The executive and legislative branches of government – the President and legislators – answer to voters who elected them. They are the political branches responsible for carrying out the will of the majority, within the boundaries of the constitution. The third branch of government, the judiciary, enforces those boundaries. Our courts and judges are accountable for ensuring equal application of the law to all citizens, protecting the individual rights guaranteed in our constitution. They must follow the law without political pressure or retribution

Since its founding, the American judicial system, considered one of the best in the free world, has shown that it will uphold basic rights based on the Constitution and laws, without fear or favor. Informed voters will keep it that way.

Learn more at <http://ivp.nawj.org>





Informed voters will not want judges influenced by politics or special interests, or by fear of losing their position because a powerful group dislikes a particular decision.

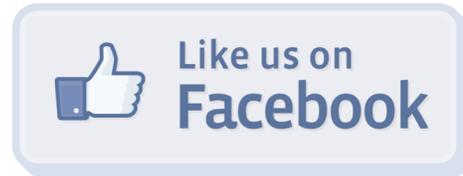
We should consider the differences between judges and other public officials when we cast our votes. Judges should make decisions based on the law and not be pressured based on politics or special interests.

The National Association of Women Judges "Informed Voters - Fair Judges" Project

is a non-partisan program to inform voters about how to make sure our judges are fair and impartial. Its goal is to inform citizens about the judicial system and to ensure that judges are elected on the basis of their character and ability. Politics and special interests should have no place in American courts. Visit the Informed Voters – Fair Judges Project web site at <http://ivp.nawj.org/>



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“When a judge does what is right according to the law, when a judge decides each case strictly on the merits, when a judge gives every case and every person the same treatment, our courts are what they have always been and must always be... fair and free.”

From “Fair and Free” featuring Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, Ret.

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