

1995

RESOLUTION: IN SUPPORT OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM IN CONNECTICUT

WHEREAS, Scripture teaches us: "You shall not pervert justice, you shall not show partiality, and you shall not take a - bribe ... justice, and only justice, you shall follow.." (Deuteronomy 16:19-20), and we are reminded in the parable of the lost sheep of the importance of every person (Matthew 18:12, Luke 15:4); and Jesus reminds us that if anyone wants to be first, he must make himself last of all and servant of all" (Mark 9:35); and

WHEREAS, The United Church of Christ Constitution states: "The United Church of Christ recognizes that God calls the whole church and every member to participate in and extend the ministry of Jesus Christ by witnessing to the Gospel in church and society"; and

WHEREAS, Trust in our democratic process is threatened by the present system of financing campaigns for public office which allows businesses and political action committees (PACs) to contribute at least twice as much (\$5000 cap) as individuals (\$2500 cap) and allows for the appearance of improper influence in the legislative process by large contributors, and correspondingly discourages participation by persons of lesser means; and

WHEREAS, Candidates spend an inordinate amount of time raising increasing amounts of money (\$10.2 million was spent on the 1994 gubernatorial campaign in Connecticut) rather than speaking with the people about issues that affect our common life; and

WHEREAS, Over 20 states have public financing legislation, and recent studies have shown that campaign finance reform legislation enjoys broad bipartisan support in the state of Connecticut and that such legislation would enable qualified persons of limited means to be candidates for public office;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates to the 128th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, are in support of state legislation which seeks more equitable campaign financing, through, but not limited to, the establishment of a voluntary fund from which candidates for public office may equally receive campaign and media funding, and through a significantly reduced cap on contributions which applies equally to businesses, PACs, and individuals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we:

- a) urge the Department of Church in Society of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ to develop resource materials for local congregations on the issue of campaign finance reform and to inform them of the status of campaign finance reform legislation;
- b) encourage individual church members to study this issue and to support the passage of campaign finance reform legislation congruent with this resolution; and

- c) ask the Department of Church in Society of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, through its Policy Advocacy Ministry, to support Connecticut legislation congruent with this resolution; an

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be modified according to proper form to be submitted to the Twenty-First General Synod of the United Church of Christ for consideration.