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Intelligence Squared Debate: Campaign Finance

RANDY LOBASSO | June 26, 2014

Pennsylvania is one of the worst places in the United States for free and fair elections, and our campaign finance laws aren't exactly helping the situation. Our commonwealth is one of 11 U.S. states with either minimal or no limits on campaign finance. That means, you, your neighbor or a corporation with interests in fracking state forests can give as much and as often as you want to your candidate of choice. There's been debate—minimal debate, mind you—to change this law, but it's done nothing to change the fact that our Democratic nominee was a relative unknown who did not show up in the polls until he carpet-bombed our TV screens with advertisements paid for with the $10 million he lent his own campaign.

Many have argued for things like public financing or, you know, sensible limits, while others have said where you spend your money is a matter of free speech. Tonight, the Constitution Center will hold a panel—live streamed for NPR's Intelligence Squared—debating these points of view. Those in on the discussion include First Amendment authority Floyd Abrams, law professor and former ACLU president Nadine Strossen, the Brennan Center for Justice's founding legal director Burt Neuborne and Fordham Law professor Zephyr Teachout, national director of the Sunlight Foundation.

Interested? You should be. The future of your democracy sort of depends on who wins this debate—not this one, per se, but the bigger argument facing our nation.

6:30pm. $30. National Constitution Center, 525 Arch St. 215.409.6600. intelligencesquaredus.org

Read more: http://www.philadelphiaweekly.com/events/Intelligence-Squared-Debate-Campaign-Finance-264454531.html#ixzz36zYwJK26