

The Blue Banner's View

Senate influenced by powerful lobby instead of votes

The Founding Fathers would roll in their graves if they knew how the current American government operates.

Many Americans do not understand which form of government America has.

This confusion explains the anger and frustration after the recent defeat of the gun control bill in the U.S. Senate.

Beginning with the adoption of the U.S. Constitution in 1788, the Founding Fathers organized a Republic for America, a representative form of government ruled according to a charter, or constitution.

The American republic later evolved into a representative democracy, in which population votes into power representatives who then vote on policy decisions.

Unfortunately, the true ruling American government remains unmentioned and unknown by many. America is now a corporatocracy.

A corporatocracy defines a population ruled by corporations, corporate interests and the wealthy elite.

Money shapes political debates, determines every outcome, and legislatures are often for sale to the highest bidder.

It should no longer be a surprise when a bill favored by the public majority faces rejection by the U.S. Senate.

Four months after the Newtown massacre, the Senate rejected a bipartisan compromise attempting to expand federal background checks for firearm purchases, even though several recent polls found an

extreme majority of Americans supported the legislation.

A Quinnipiac University telephone poll conducted in March found 92 percent of registered voters support background checks. The survey also discovered 91 percent of gun owners supported the measure.

The expanded background checks aimed to close loopholes and prevent criminals and the mentally ill from purchasing firearms.

The proposed measure to expand background checks needed 60 votes to pass and lost by only six votes.

Clearly, many Congressional members do not care what issues the majority of their represented populations support.

Rather, they are deeply concerned with maintaining campaign donations made by corporations, political action committees and lobbyists.

The influence and control these groups exert on the functioning of the U.S. government has lasted for far too long.

"The government of the United States is a foster child of the special interests.

It is not allowed to have a mind of its own," Woodrow Wilson said during a 1912 election campaign speech.

This dangerous and deceitful trend lasted in America for more than a century, and the people must take the government "of the people, by the people and for the people" back.

The people must stop voting those legislatures who are easily manipulated and controlled by outside

forces into office.

These groups do not care whether the majority supports any issues at hand. They care whether the representative who accepted funds supports the group's special interest.

Organizations like the National Rifle Association have deep pockets and their pockets fill legislature's campaign budgets, and legislatures then make voting decisions based on what the organization's lobbyists want, not what the people they represent want.

The NRA registered a record \$2.7 million in lobbying funds following the Newtown shootings, and all but three of the 45 senators who voted against the gun control bill received funds from firearms lobbyists, according to recent analysis from the Sunlight Foundation.

North Carolina Sen. Richard Burr, who voted against the recent gun control bill, received funding from pro-gun lobbyists as recently as March 4.

If the population feels disappointment for their representative's fail to support the public's desire, they must do more than complain.

They must take action.

Contact your senator and let them know you will not vote for them in their next election.

Refuse campaign support.

Show lawmakers political decisions based on anything other than the will of the people they represent is completely unacceptable.

When representatives refuse to acknowledge the will of the people they represent, let them know you will no longer allow them to represent you.

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The Blue Banner is a designated forum for free speech and welcomes letters to the editor, considering them on basis of interest, space and timeliness. Letters and articles should be emailed to the editor-in-chief or the appropriate section editor.

Letters should include the writer's name, year in school, and major or other relationship to UNCA. Include a telephone number to aid in verification. All articles are subject to editing.