

Freedom of Speech and Religion

What is Fred's record on understanding and protecting key First Amendment Freedoms?

2006 - Supported federal control over grass-roots organizations, severely limited freedom of speech

HR 513 (Roll Call 88) Voted to pass a bill imposing the same restrictions on grass-roots organizations as apply to political parties and political action committees, and permitting the Federal Elections Committee to control spending by such groups. The bill narrowly passed 218-209, on April 5, 2006.

2005 - Opposed Legislation to protect the freedom of speech for bloggers and internet users

Voted against an attempt to exempt the Internet, including blogs and e-mail, from the definition of "public communication" and thus subject to Federal Election Commission regulation and disclosure requirements. Although the bill got a majority, under House procedures a two-thirds vote was required, and it thus failed on November 2, 2005.

2002 - Supported Campaign Speech Limits.

HR 2356 (Roll Call 34). Voted for a bill to eliminate campaign contributions over \$2,000 to political parties and limit the rights of individuals and groups to participate in the political process in the two months before elections, severely limiting First Amendment freedoms.

2002 - Opposed Restoring Religious Freedom Rights.

HR 2357 (Roll Call 429). Voted against a bill to restore the right of tax-exempt religious organizations to participate in politics, so long as such participation is not a "substantial part" of their work. ACU supported this effort to loosen government control over churches, but the bill was defeated.

2001 - Opposed alterations to Campaign Finance restrictions.

HR 2356 (Roll Call Vote No. 228). Voted against allowing the campaign finance bill to have improvements proposed, or inappropriate or unconstitutional sections stricken from, specific parts of the legislation. The vote required that the bill be taken as a whole, instead of allowing specific portions to be altered, thereby ensuring the strict restrictions on grassroots organizations and moratorium on First Amendment Freedoms stayed in place.

1994 – Supported highly questionable restrictions on grassroots organizations

Voted in favor of a bill that would have placed constitutionally-dubious restrictions on the rights of grass-roots advocacy organizations to mobilize their members on behalf of their legislative interests. Vote passed, 9/29/94.

1987 – Supported codifying the Fairness Doctrine, drastically infringing on free speech

Voted to establish as law policy known as the "Fairness Doctrine," which requires broadcasters to air all sides of controversial issues, restricting the Constitutional rights of the broadcasters to freedom of expression. Vote on June 3, 1987 (*Congressional Record*, pages H4141-4160, roll call 164.)