

MEDIA MENTION

Michael Toner Quoted on Labor Union's Political Spending in a *Boston Globe* Article

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Wiley Rein Election Law & Government Ethics Practice co-chair Michael Toner discussed the political spending of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) in a *Boston Globe* article. The union, whose members include health care workers and janitors, recently organized a group called MassUniting, that has been running an ad criticizing Sen. Scott Brown (R-MA). The group is not required by campaign finance laws to disclose its donors and says that it is using funds from SEIU as well as other nonprofit partners. Additionally, the Supreme Court Ruled in the *Citizens United* case that corporations and unions can raise and spend unlimited funds to advocate for or against a political candidate. Mr. Toner said that "as long as political activity is not their primary purpose, the groups can now run ads that advocate directly for or against a candidate's election, and are no longer confined to nominally issue-oriented ads." He added that "it's a good example of how the *Citizens United* decision has promoted robust political speech across the spectrum." "There's rightly been a focus on corporations spending more after *Citizens United*, he said. "But labor unions also have much broader latitude, and it sounds like SEIU is taking advantage of that," Mr. Toner concluded.

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