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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

June 20, 2004

Mr. Bradley A. Smith
Chairman
Federal Election Commission
999 E Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20463

Re: *Petition for Rulemaking by America's Community Bankers*

Dear Chairman Smith:

I write today to express my strong support for the petition for rulemaking filed by America's Community Bankers (ACB) that would allow members of trade associations to use a payroll deduction to help raise funds for the trade associations' political action committees. I am encouraged by this proposal because it will not only improve the political process, but also is consistent with the continued movement of the U.S. economy toward electronic payments.

It is my hope that the Commission will begin a rulemaking proceeding based on this petition to amend its regulations in order to bring them more in line with today's reality. The House Financial Services Committee has been involved in making changes to the laws that govern electronic transactions and payments and has witnessed the tremendous growth of such transactions. Because electronic transactions are so widespread, I believe that the Commission should amend its regulations to allow contributors to make use of this simple technology.

Equally important, the change advocated by ACB would enable more individuals, including small business owners, to participate in the electoral process.

With the increased importance of PACs to the political process, I feel that it is essential to make it as simple as possible for individuals to contribute to PACs. Trade association PACs present a unique opportunity for individuals from across the country to pool their resources in order to be involved in the political process.

By allowing members of trade associations to collect voluntary contributions through payroll deductions, it will become easier for contributors to spread their contributions across a number of pay periods and thus will be more affordable.

I understand that the Commission is currently involved in a large-scale rulemaking that has consumed its resources, but hope that it will be able to turn to this issue as soon as it completes that project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John T. Doolittle". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

JOHN T. DOOLITTLE
United States Representative