

17860 CRESTLINE DRIVE, LAKE OSWEGO, OR 97034
503-675-1969

e-mail: waterouzel@comcast.net

4 April, 2004

Ms. Mai T. Dinh
Acting Assistant General Counsel
Federal Election Commission
United States of America

Dear Ms. Dinh:

I urge the FEC not to redefine political committees in such a way as to include nonprofit advocacy organizations. To do so would have a wide-reaching and damaging effect on the activities and mission of countless non-profit advocacy groups which work on diverse issues throughout our society.

Non-profit advocacy groups often undertake to inform and educate the public about important issues, and their contributions to both sides of any debate are a vital feature of free speech in our country. To restrict their ability to do so would significantly undermine public awareness and informed debate on a wide array of issues, from the actions of elected officials to the regulation of industry.

The proposed rule change would have a profound effect on the structure and activities of organizations that the FEC is not authorized to regulate. Congress has required by law that these organizations disclose their finances fully and publicly. Their activities and speech should remain independent and free, and regulated by Congress. McCain-Feingold campaign reform law appropriately regulates the airing of broadcast advertisements close to an election, but equally appropriately does not otherwise restrict or limit the activities of nonprofit public interest groups. Further adjustments to campaign reform law, when necessary, should be made by legislation.

The cornerstone of our society is our commitment to freedom of speech, and access to information. Reclassifying hundreds of nonprofit advocacy groups as political committees, as proposed, would grossly overstep the bounds of oversight of the FEC, have a potentially devastating effect on the activities of groups that contribute in vital ways to informing and energizing the public, and ultimately hurt the public interest. It would silence multiple independent voices, and thereby increase "market share" of the voice of national political committees, which would significantly impoverish the public's access to diverse points of view on a wide variety of issues.

Rules for nonprofit advocacy should be decided by Congress. They should not be made by the Federal Election Commission, and particularly they should not be

changed by the FEC during an election year, under partisan pressure. I ask the FEC not to attempt any redefinition of political committees that would affect nonprofit advocacy groups.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Evie Frost". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Evie Frost

cc President Bush, Senator Gordon Smith, Senator Ron Wyden, Rep. Darlene Hooley