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FEC TO BEGIN AUDITS NEXT WEEK OF
PRESIDENTIAL MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS

WASHINGTON - AUGUST 15 - - - The Federal Election Commission today announced it would begin "audit and reviews" next week of receipts and expenditures of Presidential candidates as a preliminary step toward certifying candidates eligible for matching federal funds.

The Commission staff will audit the records of the principal campaign committees of Presidential candidates who "have either announced that they have met threshold requirements which would make them eligible to receive public funds, or, on the basis of reports and statements filed with the Commission, appear to have raised substantial amounts of funds."

The FEC audit teams will begin reviewing two committees at a time, in alphabetical order by committee, beginning August 18, through the middle of October.

The Commission listed four objectives in the preliminary audit:

- - (1) to enable the Commission to identify which candidates appear to have met threshold requirements for public funding;
- - (2) to determine what total amounts of funds appear to qualify for matching payments of public funds.
- - (3) to determine what, if any, problem areas exist where the auditors are unable to determine the identity of certain contributors; and
- - (4) to acquaint respective committee officials with the contents of the FEC guideline on recordkeeping requirements recently published in the Federal Register.

The Commission identified 10 Presidential campaign committees that would receive the preliminary audit, including the following: Bentsen in '76; Committee for Jimmy Carter; Constitutional Presidency McCarthy '76; Harris for President; Jackson for President Committee Sanford for President Committee; The President Ford Committee; Udall '76 Committee; George Wallace; and the Wallace Campaign, Inc.

The Commission said, "This preliminary list of committees represents those candidates and campaign committees reporting substantial receipts and expenditures." It said it would "add other Presidential candidates and their committees to the preliminary audit schedule as their financial activities increase to substantial volumes." The Commission also authorized the audit staff to audit subsidiary committees reporting to a principal campaign committee "in order to complete the audit of the principal campaign committee."

The "Federal Election Campaign Amendments of 1974" (P.L. 93-443) authorizes the FEC to certify matching payments to Presidential primary candidates. Only contributions of \$250 or less are entitled to be matched by federal funds, and only 50% of the candidate's primary expenditure limit can be provided in federal funds. Before being eligible for federal matching payments, a candidate must first raise \$5,000 in contributions of \$250 or less from contributors in each of at least 20 States.