

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION



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WASHINGTON - February 15, 1979 - Adequate funds are essential "for the orderly and efficient implementation of the public financing and disclosure laws for the 1980 Presidential and Congressional elections," Federal Election Commission Vice Chairman Robert O. Tiernan said today. He and Commissioner Vernon W. Thomson testified on the FEC's needs this morning before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Treasury, Postal Service and General Government. They told the hearing, "Based on past experience," the FEC will require a budget of some \$10.7 million to enforce the Federal Election Campaign Act "in a fair, efficient, vigorous and independent manner."

In his testimony, Mr. Tiernan said, "any reductions in funds for the Commission, including across-the-board-cuts for all Federal agencies, will jeopardize the 1980 Presidential election process involving public financing, and hamper Commission efforts to fairly and effectively implement the campaign finance and disclosure provisions for the 1980 Congressional elections."

The FEC was established in mid-1975 and shortly thereafter had to be reconstituted by Congress because of a Supreme Court decision. By and large, Mr. Tiernan said, the Commission performed well during this difficult period. "But," he said, "attention is already turning to 1980, and the public, the Congress and the media have a right to expect a smooth first-rate effort by the FEC in the regulation and administration of the 1980 elections."

The budget request for fiscal year 1980 represents FEC's recommendation on the resources necessary to fully implement the Federal Election Campaign Act. The law which requires the FEC "to promote voluntary compliance with the Act; to enhance full public disclosure of campaign finance activity; to certify and dispense public funds for national party nominating conventions; to certify and disburse matching funds in the Presidential primaries; to certify and disburse federal funds for the Presidential general election; to provide easy access to the public for all information on campaign finance activity; and to verify and enforce the provisions of the Act through audits and enforcement actions."