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FEC SUGGESTS 24 RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR CHANGES IN ELECTION LAWS

WASHINGTON--Twenty-four recommendations for legislative changes in federal election laws have been sent to Congress and the President by the Federal Election Commission with an explanation that at least eight of the proposals offer budgetary savings of between $400,000 and $500,000.

Legislative recommendations to Congress and the President are required by law, and are made annually by the FEC based on its experience in administering election laws. They suggest areas of the statute which Congress may wish to review for modification or revision.

Among the proposals are five aimed at enhancing public disclosure, and at reducing some bookkeeping requirements for campaigns and political committees. Along with projected savings, they are:

To require House and Senate campaigns to report their financial activity for the entire campaign cycle.

-The FEC noted that the current practice of reporting activity on a calendar year basis causes difficulties for the public in determining what was actually raised and spent on campaigns spanning more than one year. (Estimated savings: $140,000)

To require campaigns to file their reports earlier in a month.

-Citing increasing public demand for more timely information, the FEC recommended earlier reporting dates following the end of a reporting period. This particularly so in Presidential campaigns which report on a monthly basis with reports due on the 20th day of the following month, often making campaign finance information out-of-date with actual events.

To change contribution limits so that their application would be to a campaign cycle, rather than to individual primary, general, special, or run-off elections. (Estimated savings: $140,000.)

-As suggested by the FEC, this would have the effect of reducing burdensome recordkeeping requirements for committees, while maintaining current contribution limitations.

The Commission also proposes that Congress clarify the statutory requirement to report operating expenses. The question frequently arises whether, under the law, it is sufficient for a committee to report only initial payments to contractors, vendors, etc., or whether disclosure also must include secondary payments made to sub-contractors, agents, and

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others, who then might be required to report their records to the political committee or might cause the original filing committee to have to file lengthy amendments.

Among the other recommendations are:

Reaffirm Congressional intent that draft committees are "political committees" subject to reporting requirements, prohibitions and limitations of the Federal Election Campaign Act;

Make the FEC the sole point of entry for all disclosure documents filed by Federal candidates and political committees;

Eliminate state-by-state limitations on expenditures for publicly financed Presidential primary candidates, (Estimated savings: $140,000); and

Define the extent to which foreign nationals may participate, if at all, in connection with elections to any political office.

Establish a reimbursement account to enable the Commission to offset expenses incurred from reproducing documents and tapes purchased by requestors. (Estimated savings: $100,000).