

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
TUESDAY, JULY 14, 1987

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FEC URGES ELIMINATION OF STATE SPENDING LIMITS FOR PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNS

WASHINGTON -- Congressional consideration of 24 legislative recommendations was urged today by Scott E. Thomas, Chairman of the Federal Election Commission. The recommendations were forwarded to Congress earlier this year.

In testimony before the Subcommittee on Elections of the Committee on House Administration of the House of Representatives, Chairman Thomas, accompanied by Vice Chairman Thomas J. Josefiak, focused on three recommendations. They were: 1) The elimination of State expenditures limits for publicly financed Presidential primary election candidates; 2) The addition of a provision prohibiting fraudulent solicitation of campaign funds; and 3) The addition of language that would ensure timely verification of the multicandidate status of political committees.

State expenditure limitations have proven a significant accounting burden for campaigns and an equally difficult audit and enforcement task for the Commission. Eliminating this requirement, "would reduce the recordkeeping and reporting burdens on Presidential candidates, increase their flexibility in running their campaigns and reduce FEC spending on audit and enforcement matters", he explained.

Because it has no statutory authority over fraudulent fund-raising by persons or committees purporting to act on behalf of candidates or parties, the FEC has been unable to act.

Establishing a requirement that political committees advise the FEC when they qualify as a multicandidate committee would provide candidate committees with earlier, more accurate notice and enable them to accept PAC contributions with certainty of their legality. The Federal Election Campaign Act limits a multicandidate committee to a contribution limit of \$1,000 to a candidate for each election. A qualified committee, however, may contribute \$5,000 per candidate per election. To be qualified, a committee must have been in existence at least six months, have received at least 50 contributions and have made contributions to at least five candidates for federal office.

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