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FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

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FEC PUBLISHES INITIAL REQUESTS  
FOR ADVISORY OPINIONS

WASHINGTON - JUNE 20 - Host city services to national conventions, national telethon costs, and retirement of debts from past Congressional campaigns are among the subjects of the first "Requests for Advisory Opinions" being published by the Federal Election Commission for public comment.

The new federal campaign financing law requires publication of all requests for FEC Advisory Opinions on a "specific transaction or activity" by officeholders, candidates or political committees. After a 10-day period for public comment, the FEC may issue the Advisory Opinion. Persons or committees receiving an Advisory Opinion are "presumed to be in compliance" with the campaign financing laws if they "act in good faith" in accordance with the opinion.

The requests for Advisory Opinions approved for publication at the Commission's meeting Thursday include the following:

#1. Convention Financing: whether "in-kind" services provided by a host city for a national convention must be included in the national convention expenditure limit. (requested by both Republican and Democratic National Committee)

#2. Party Committee status: numerous questions, posed by the Michigan Democratic Party, concerning political party committee responsibilities under the reporting and expenditure limitation provisions of the law.

#3. Office-holder services: a request by the National Republican Congressional Committee for an opinion as to whether various services provided to incumbent officeholders, such as preparation of newsletters and questionnaires and reprinting Congressional Record statements are campaign contributions or expenditures.

#4. Telethon expenses: whether financial transactions involved in preparing a nationally televised fund-raising telethon are considered expenditures under the financing law. (Requested by Democratic National Committee)

#5 and 6. Debt cancellation: Whether current contribution limits are applicable to contributions made this year to satisfy debts incurred in campaigns from prior years when there were no such contribution limits. (10 requests for Advisory Opinions from numerous candidates or committees).