

NEWS FROM...

# FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION



1325 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20463

RELEASE ON RECEIPT

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## FEC HOLDS HEARINGS ON CANDIDATE DEBATES

WASHINGTON - SEPT. 8 - The Federal Election Commission today announced its list of witnesses for public hearings on problems relating to the funding of debates between Federal candidates.

The hearings will be held on Monday, September 12, from 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., and from 2 p.m. - 4:30 p.m., at the FEC, 1325 K Street, N.W., in the 5th floor conference room.

Witnesses scheduled to appear (as of Wednesday, September 7, 1977) include:

### MORNING SESSION - 9:30 a.m.:

1. Ms. Ruth Clusen  
Chairperson, League of Women Voters
2. Mr. Nicholas Johnson  
National Citizens' Committee for Broadcasting
3. Mr. Benjamin Vandergrift  
Washington-Lee University School of Law
4. Mr. Ralph Trisko  
Private communications consultant

### AFTERNOON SESSION - 2:00 p.m.:

1. Dr. Sidney Kraus, Ph.d.  
Chairman, Cleveland State College Dept. of Communications
2. Mr. Charles Benton  
President, William Benton Foundation
3. Mr. John C. Armor  
Counsel to independent presidential candidate Eugene McCarthy in litigation brought to stop 1976 debates; and senior partner, Armor and Marcus
4. Abram Eisenman  
Independent presidential candidate
5. William Schluter  
Candidate, U.S. House of Representatives, 13th District, New Jersey

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In a notice published July 12, 1977, in the Federal Register, the FEC asked for written comments, suggested regulatory language, and factual material relating to questions such as:

- (a) Are Federal candidate debates held "for the purpose of influencing" an election or are they "in connection with" an election?
- (b) Does the inclusion/exclusion of third party and independent candidates affect whether the funds to finance a debate "influence" an election or are "in connection with" an election? How does public funding or ballot qualification affect this question?
- (c) Should candidate debates be sponsored by educational or non-profit organizations, or should other categories of sponsors be allowed?
- (d) What are the partisan effects of candidate debates on elections?
- (e) Who should control the subject matter and format of debates?
- (f) What effects do corporate, labor union and Federal contractor sponsorship and funding have on candidate debates, and the ensuing election?