

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

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WASHINGTON — Ten presidential candidates, two party conventions and three general election campaigns are expected to ask for public funding in the 1984 presidential year.

This projection was made today by Federal Election Commission Vice Chairman Lee Ann Elliott in testimony before the Subcommittee on Treasury, Postal Service and General Government of the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations. She was joined in testifying by Commission Chairman Danny Lee McDonald and Commissioner John Warren McGarry.

Describing the FEC 1984 request of \$10,343,139 as a "bare-bones, no-frills budget," Commissioner Elliott said the amount, when adjusted for inflation based on 1974 dollars, equates to \$5,172,500, the third smallest amount appropriated in the Commission's eight-year history. During 1980, the last presidential year, the FEC's appropriation was \$6,077,000 when adjusted for inflation. "If we were to request an amount in dollars adjusted for inflation equivalent to what was received in 1980, we would now be asking for \$12,174,000," she said. The 1984 request includes \$163,000 for Phase 1 of a study to develop voluntary nationwide standards for voting systems, which would be a follow-up to a Congressionally-mandated study on the need for such standards.

The Commission expects to carry out its responsibilities at the \$10.3 million level, Commissioner Elliott said, because of economies which it has instituted. These include new and improved procedures for handling review and computer entry of reports, regulations revisions which would help cut audit time and streamline internal procedures, and more efficient use of personnel.

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"The Federal Election Commission has made substantial, and I believe successful, efforts to establish procedures which make full use of the dollars appropriated to us," Commissioner Elliott stated, "and we are constantly alert for additional improvements."

In comparing the 1984 budget to the 1980 presidential campaign, she said the Commission plans to operate with the equivalent of 245 full-time employees whereas the staff was 271 full-time employees in 1980.

"The workload at the Commission in 1984 will not merely reflect a continuation of 1983 activity," she asserted. "The Commission has special mandated responsibilities during a presidential election year. Not only will there be many additional reports to be disclosed and reviewed, but the Commission must act on requests for funds for primaries, party conventions and the general election," she continued. "These include compulsory audit functions, publication costs, reports review costs, public information costs and enforcement costs, all of which accelerate during the presidential election cycles," she explained.