

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

Press Office
1325 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20463
Phone: Local 523-4065 Toll Free 800-424-9530



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CONTACT: FRED EILAND
SHARON SNYDER

FEC REPORTS 1981-82 COMMUNICATION COSTS

WASHINGTON -- Labor unions and membership organizations spent \$2.2 million of their treasury monies to communicate election-related information to their members during the 1981-82 election cycle, according to a new report released by the Federal Election Commission. There were no expenses reported by corporations.

The expenses, known as "communication costs", are made directly from the treasuries of corporations, unions, and other membership organizations, and are in addition to and separate from the contributions and independent expenditures made by the PAC's of those same organizations. The costs must be reported once the organization's total activity for the election exceeds \$2,000.

Throughout 1981-82, 25 union groups and 5 membership organizations spent \$2,133,711 to promote the candidacies of 714 federal candidates and \$84,623 advocating the defeat of 180 federal candidates. All but \$5,591 of the total spent was related to Congressional candidates.

Federal election law allows partisan communications to be financed by a corporation, union or membership organization as long as the communications are directed only toward stockholders, executive and administrative personnel (and their families) of a corporation, or to member of a union or membership group (and their families.)

Partisan communications may include such activities as:

- Distributing literature promoting a certain candidate or advocating his/her defeat (providing the material is not a reproduction of any candidate's own literature);

- Inviting a candidate to appear at a regularly scheduled meeting or event attended by select personnel/members;

- Paying for phone banks to contact select personnel/members to urge them to vote for a particular candidate;

- Conducting get-out-the-vote drives aimed at select personnel/members urging them to vote for a particular candidate.

In 1979-80, the total amount spent by 62 groups for communication costs was \$3,971,559. Of that amount, \$1,332,010 was spent in relation to Congressional races. In 1977-78, \$313,365 was spent on U.S. Senate and House candidates. Increases in this activity have been 251% from 1978 to 1980 and 67% from 1980 to 1982.

The FEC Index of Communication Costs for 1981-82 is available for \$5 from the Commission's Public Records Office, 1325 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20463. The book is a set of two indexes: the first lists each organization making communications expenditures and summarizes the amounts spent for and against each particular candidate. The second index is a listing of the candidates, with details on how much various organizations spent for or against each candidate.

Attached is a summary of the amounts spent for House and Senate candidates, categorized by party and by candidate status. Also provided is a listing of the groups spending the most money and the candidates most affected by such spending.

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