

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

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FEC SEEKS COMMENTS ON "TESTING THE WATERS" REGULATIONS

WASHINGTON--Public comments on its "testing the waters" regulations are being invited by the Federal Election Commission.

In an announcement published in the Federal Register, the FEC's request is for comments on whether the "testing the waters" regulations should be retained in their present form; possible revision to clarify the scope of permissible activities under the "testing the waters" exemptions; and possible revision regarding the applicability of the contribution limitations and prohibitions to receipts and disbursements for "testing the waters" activities.

Closing date for public comments is February 16. Any revision of the "testing the waters" regulations would not become effective until January, 1985, at the earliest.

The Federal Election Campaign Act defines a candidate for Federal office as a person who has raised or spent, or who has permitted others to raise or spend, more than \$5,000 on his or her behalf. This threshold triggers a requirement for such person to register with the FEC as a candidate, and to meet the campaign finance reporting requirements of the Act.

Through regulations, the FEC has established limited exemptions to those thresholds which permit an individual to test the feasibility of a campaign for Federal office without becoming a candidate. In addition, the Commission has issued several advisory opinions which have further interpreted proposed "testing the waters" activities.

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