

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: THURSDAY
FEBRUARY 19, 1987

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FEC ESTIMATES 18 TO 20 CANDIDATES TO SEEK PRESIDENTIAL FUNDING IN 1988

WASHINGTON--Some 18 to 20 candidates from both major political parties may qualify for public funding during the 1988 presidential primaries, the Federal Election Commission said today.

Testifying before the Subcommittee on Elections of the Committee on House Administration, FEC Vice Chairman Thomas J. Josefiak, chairman of the agency's Finance Committee, said such numbers "will obviously place far greater responsibilities upon the Commission and demands upon agency resources than we have ever experienced before".

The FEC's appearance before the Commission was in support of the authorization and budget for fiscal year 1988. Joining in presenting testimony were Commissioner John Warren McGarry, a member of the finance committee, and FEC Chairman Scott Thomas.

In presenting the FEC's request for \$14,174,000, the FEC said the figures were developed with the Office of Management and Budget for submission in the President's budget.

Commissioner Josefiak said the proposed figures "represent our agency's commitment to maintain current levels of services, meet the special demands of the 1988 Presidential election year and continue FEC efforts to 'recapture' 1986 election cycle data not previously processed into our computer system".

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In outlining the agency's projected activities, Commissioner Josefiak said, "in addition to the normal, and historically increasing, workload involved in the biennial Congressional elections, Presidential campaigns generate substantial amounts of work for every division of the FEC. While many of the audit and enforcement issues will not be resolved until Fiscal Year 1989, the certification, public funding and disclosure workload falls mostly in the budget year now being considered."

Making reference to sizable and unexpected "Gramm-Rudman", and other budget cuts the past year that resulted in a decision to forego computerization of some data, the FEC advised the House committee that it already has taken steps to "recapture" individual contributions of \$500 or more to candidate committees. This has been made possible through administrative savings in fiscal year 1987 from unanticipated rent savings, cost-cutting in computer contracts with outside providers and lower staffing levels resulting from the 1986 hiring freeze, Commissioner Josefiak said.

The proposed 1988 budget would permit the agency to complete its effort to computerize the 1986 data. "We look forward to restoring our computerized research services to their full and complete level of usefulness as we enter the new political season", he said.

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