

NLWJC - Kagan

Counsel - Box 034 - Folder 010

Campaign Finance Materials [7]

The Bipartisan Clean Congress Act of 1996 (HR 2566)
Introduced by Linda Smith October 31, 1995
Updated February 1, 1996

Cosponsors:

1. *Christopher Shays (R-CN)*
2. *Marty Meehan (D-MA)*
3. *David Minge (D-MN)*
4. *Marge Roukema (R-NJ)*
5. *Doug Bereuter (R-NE)*
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original cosponsors in italics

Democrats: 8

Republicans: 13 (excluding Rep. Smith)



AMY ROSENBAUM
Legislative Assistant

Congressman Marty Meehan
5th District, Massachusetts

318 Cannon Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-3411
(202) 226-0771 FAX

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT H.R. 2566

HOW DO WE PROTECT OURSELVES FROM INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES?

Candidates abiding by the spending limits would not be hindered in their ability to respond to independent expenditures. Furthermore, complying candidates would receive a greater return on their spending due to the broadcast media discounts.

Under the current campaign finance system, the only way for a candidate to protect himself or herself from unfavorable independent expenditures is to raise enough money to counter independent expenditures. H.R. 2566 provides that if independent expenditures totaling \$25,000 or more are made against a complying candidate, or in favor of the opponent of a complying candidate, then the complying candidate's spending limit is increased by a matching amount in order to respond.

For example, if the AFL-CIO or the National Rifle Association ran a \$25,000 independent expenditure advertising blitz in favor of a certain candidate, then any of that candidate's opponents who comply with the voluntary spending limits would be permitted to increase their spending limit by \$25,000.

HOW DO WE PROTECT OURSELVES FROM WEALTHY CANDIDATES?

As with independent expenditures, the only way for a candidate to counter the personal spending of a wealthy opponent is to raise as much money as possible. H.R. 2566 would give complying candidates enhanced mechanisms for countering an opponent's personal wealth.

To receive the benefits of discounted broadcast and postal rates, a candidate must not spend more than \$60,000 (10 percent of the spending limit) in personal wealth on his or her campaign. A wealthy candidate may choose not to abide by these voluntary limits. However, rejecting these limits will give his or her complying opponent certain mechanisms for responding.

First, complying candidates would be able to buy broadcast time at half the cost of a wealthy candidate. Therefore, complying candidates will need less money to buy the same amount of advertising time as wealthy candidates.

Second, complying candidates are able to increase their spending limit, up to twice as much as the \$600,000 original spending limit, if a wealthy candidate spends in excess of \$60,000 of personal wealth.

Third, complying candidates are permitted to accept larger contributions from individuals --

\$2,000 instead of \$1,000 per election -- if they face a wealthy candidate who spent over \$150,000 in personal funds (25 percent of the spending limit) or received contributions and spent personal funds, which in the aggregate, exceed \$300,000 (50 percent of the spending limit). This increased individual contribution will enhance a complying candidate's ability to compete against a wealthy candidate.

WHY NOT JUST INCREASE THE CURRENT INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION LIMIT FROM \$1,000 TO \$2,500 OR \$5,000 TO COMBAT WEALTHY CANDIDATES?

This solution would only result in bidding up federal campaigns. We want to bring campaigns back to ordinary American people. Typically, these are not the people that can afford to give \$2,500 or \$5,000 to a campaign. By increasing the individual contribution limit, we would be shifting campaigns to one particular segment of voters -- namely, wealthy contributors -- and ignoring the vast majority of voters. Under this scenario, we could have a wealthy millionaire candidate competing against a candidate who receives a majority of his or her contributions from large donors. Under this scenario, the millionaire candidate would also be able to raise the increased \$2,500 or \$5,000 contribution from his or her rich friends.

H.R. 2566 offers a better solution. It arms complying candidates with certain weapons that wealthy candidates would not have at their disposal. These weapons come in the form of broadcast media discounts, mailing discounts, and an increased individual contribution limit of \$2,000 for the complying candidates only.

WON'T THE VOLUNTARY SPENDING LIMITS IN H.R. 2566 HURT CHALLENGERS AND BENEFIT INCUMBENTS?

Actually, just the opposite. Under the current system, incumbents have a huge advantage over challengers. House incumbents consistently outraise and outspend challengers, on average, by a ratio of 2.6 to 1.

H.R. 2566 provides a voluntary spending limit of \$600,000 for House races. By encouraging candidates to agree to a spending limit, H.R. 2566 will level the playing field and give challengers an opportunity to compete with incumbents. Furthermore, complying candidates will be able to purchase more broadcast time with less money due to the discounted broadcast rates provided to eligible candidates.

WHY DO YOU BAN PACS? ISN'T THIS UNCONSTITUTIONAL?

PAC money has distorted the political process because it is tied so closely to a special-interest group's agenda. Almost half of the money raised by House incumbents comes from

PACs, thus making it harder for challengers to compete. H.R. 2566 eliminates PAC contributions from federal elections.

The courts have never directly addressed the question of whether a PAC ban is unconstitutional. But, H.R. 2566 provides a fall-back provision should the courts strike down the PAC ban. This fall-back provision would reduce the current PAC contribution limit from \$5,000 to \$1,000 per election, the same contribution limit for individuals. Further, the total amount that a candidate could accept from PACs would be capped at 25 percent of the spending limit (\$150,000). This fall-back provision would keep PACs from unduly influencing the political process.

WHY CAN'T WE JUST LOWER THE CONTRIBUTION LIMITS OF PACS AND ALLOW INDIVIDUALS TO GIVE MORE?

Some believe we can't eliminate campaign contributions from PACs all at once, instead we should go after them bit by bit. However, lowering the contribution limits of PACs will do nothing to change the culture of fundraising in Washington, D.C. and the money will still continue to flow disproportionately to incumbents.

Currently, there are an estimated 14,000 lobbyists in Washington, D.C. all working for special interests. If a PAC is restricted from giving the usual amount per election cycle, the money can simply be funneled to candidates through the PACs's lobbyist. And it is particularly helpful if the individuals' contribution limits are raised -- the lobbyists can give more.

The nightly fundraisers at the Capitol would not be affected. Incumbents would still have the upper hand with generous checks from PACs *and* PAC lobbyists flowing to their campaign coffers -- all without having to leave town. In the 1994 election, PACs favored incumbents by almost a 4 to 1 margin. This will continue to happen unless the culture is changed and PACs are prohibited from contributing altogether.

HOW DO YOU ADDRESS SOFT MONEY?

H.R. 2566 bans the use of soft money in federal elections. Under H.R. 2566, any money solicited or received by the national political parties would have to comply with the current contribution limits. Also, any money spent by the state parties on any activities which might influence federal elections -- including voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives -- must comply with federal law. Finally, any money raised by a federal candidate or officeholder must comply with federal law. These three provisions close the soft money loopholes.

WHAT IS YOUR JUSTIFICATION FOR PROVIDING REDUCED RATE BROADCAST TIME?

The airwaves are owned by the public. Broadcasters receive a license to use and profit from the public's airwaves. It seems logical for Congress to require broadcasters to provide a reasonable amount of airtime at reduced rates for the sake of providing a fair and credible election process.

HOW CAN WE REFORM OUR CAMPAIGN FINANCE SYSTEM WITHOUT LOOKING LIKE HYPOCRITES AS WE FACE RE-ELECTION?

Any serious reformer will acknowledge that comprehensive reform must happen at the beginning of an election cycle, not halfway through an election year. H.R. 2566 does not begin during the current election cycle.

Supporters of H.R. 2566 realize that Members must operate under the current rules. Despite this fact, we should not give up in our endeavors to change the system. The national groups behind campaign reform (Common Cause, The League of Women Voters, Public Citizen, United We Stand America) will applaud those Members who take a bold stand in changing the system.

NOV 12, 1995

N2948

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EDITORIALS

Money and politics

All but lost in the budget battle gripping Congress is the surprising revival of an issue leaders of both parties would just as soon leave alone: campaign finance reform. House Speaker Newt Gingrich and President Bill Clinton shook hands five months ago on a plan to establish a campaign finance reform commission, but Gingrich couldn't find the time to appoint his members. Clinton proposed some commission members and has regularly criticized Gingrich on the issue, but hasn't pushed any legislation.

In the midst of this inaction, a bipartisan group of Congress members has come forward with their own reform bill, which is now gathering momentum.

It's an interesting group. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., has conservative credentials and credibility on both sides of the aisle. Sen. Russ Feingold, D-Wisc., is an independent-minded left-winger. On the House side, our own Rep. Marty Meehan, D-5th, has joined with Rep. Chris Shays, a moderate Republican from Connecticut, and Rep. Linda Smith, a conservative Republican freshman from Washington.

Their bills would prohibit political action committee donations of all kinds, limit contributions from large donors, require that at least 60 percent of campaign donations come from within a candidate's home state, prohibit taxpayer-financed mailings from Congressmen during election years and close the "soft money" loophole that has allowed donations in excess of current limits.

The bills would also set voluntary spending limits, with provisions that allow the limit to be exceeded when the complying candidate is being outspent. Candidates agreeing to the limits would be eligible for discounts on broadcast advertising and mass mailings.

The initiative — dubbed the Bipartisan Clean Congress Act — has already been endorsed by the League of Women Voters, Common Cause, Ralph Nader's Public Citizen organization and Ross Perot. Meehan and his House colleagues are laying the groundwork for a discharge petition that would force a vote on the House floor.

They've already grabbed the attention of Gingrich, who suddenly is talking about a commission again, one that would report back to Congress next May. In a remarkable display of audacious rhetorical smoke, Gingrich told a House committee last week that Congressional campaigns aren't too expensive. They aren't expensive enough, he said, considering how much newspapers and television networks spend covering campaigns. Run that by us again?

Those who support real campaign finance reform weren't buying it. Since taking over Congress, Republicans have set new records soliciting donations from the people they regulate. Presidential candidates have spent as much time raising money as campaigning. President Clinton has been raking in \$1,000 checks through a weekly series of black-tie fund-raisers, the next of which is tomorrow in Boston.

Mark Hanna, Ohio's legendary 19th century political boss, said, "In politics, three things are important. The first is money, and I can't remember what the other two are."

Politics hasn't changed much since Hanna's heyday. Gingrich, Clinton and friends all say they favor campaign finance reform and they'll get to it — just as soon as they bankroll their next campaign.

For Marty Meehan and his colleagues, that's not good enough. It's not good enough for us, either, and we wish the reformers success.

BOSTON GLOBE

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A revolt against special interests

No longer is the call for an overhaul of the campaign finance system the thin plea of professional reformers alone. Republican Sen. John McCain of Arizona and Democratic Sen. Russell Feingold of Wisconsin, along with determined freshmen in both branches of Congress and presidential candidate Pat Buchanan, are among those now clamoring for change. Sens. Sam Nunn and Bill Bradley blasted the system as a debasement of public service when they announced their retirements. Gov. Pete Wilson of California did the same upon quitting the presidential race. The message now resonates with the public.

Congressional leaders, including House Speaker Newt Gingrich and especially Senate majority leader Bob Dole, will ignore this at their peril.

Speaker Tom Foley ignored the cry, which voters delivered loudly in 1992, and his own constituents dumped him fast. The call has only grown louder, yet the leaders still act deaf.

Among the current proposals, McCain's goes farthest toward the changes essential to restoring credibility to the elective process, setting up a system of voluntary spending limits and restricting the influence of corporations and other big-money interests. Specifically, the proposal by McCain and Feingold, also backed by freshman GOP Sen. Fred Thompson, would:

- Ban the notorious "soft money" contributions, the gigantic loophole by which huge sums — more than \$120 million in the last three years — most of which would be illegal if given to candidates, are funneled into campaigns through party organizations.

- Ban contributions from political action committees or, if that is ruled unconstitutional, reduce

the contribution limit from \$5,000 to the same \$1,000 that applies to individuals.

- Ban "bundling" by individuals or PACs, a practice by which influence-peddlers can make large contributions by collecting a number of smaller ones.

- Establish spending limits that candidates will agree to by requiring television stations to provide bargain rates for their political ads. To qualify, Senate candidates would have to raise 60 percent of their funds from home-state residents.

The president of Common Cause, Ann McBride, called the package "fair, tough, creative and comprehensive" and expressed optimism that the issue would finally get a vote and pass.

While McCain's proposal applies only to the Senate, comparable legislation for the House is being prepared by Reps. Martin Meehan of Lowell and Christopher Shays of Connecticut. Yet the last word from the House majority leader, Dick Armey, after several vacillations from Gingrich, is that the issue will not be brought up this year.

That would be incredible. The 1994 vote that put congressional Republicans in power was clearly an indictment of Washington politics, a cynical system spotlighted more vividly still by the diaries of Sen. Bob Packwood.

Campaign finance should have been reformed in 1993. The health care debate, the 1994 elections and the ongoing budget battle would have been very different if the leverage of special interests had been curtailed.

It can't be done yesterday, of course, but if the congressional leaders want to prevent their revolution from turning back against them, it had better be done before tomorrow.

NOV 3, 1995

N5600

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

Reform Now

Public demand for campaign finance reform has become so unrelenting that Democrats and Republicans have now joined forces behind a plan that has the support of everyone from Common Cause to Ross Perot.

The groveling behavior of Sen. Bob Packwood, revealed in his own diaries, made evident to everyone the degrading and corrupting rituals of money-raising that the present system forces members of Congress to submit to. This system taints, not only hacks like Packwood, but those whom we believe to be honorable.

Now bipartisan bills introduced in the House and the Senate promise to create a new system designed to reduce the influence of big spenders whose legal bribery so distorts our politics.

In the previous Congress, when the Democrats still held a majority, Republicans used obstructionism to kill campaign finance reform. Sen. James Jeffords, one of the more sensible members on the Republican side, found himself in his usual posture as the man in the middle, working to salvage reform by watering it down.

Republicans are now in the majority, and the public's demand for campaign finance reform has not abated. Reform has not been a priority for House Speaker Newt Gingrich, but conservative purists, aligned with people all across the spectrum, may have forced his hand. With increasing support among Republicans, Jeffords may finally feel less lonely.

The newly unveiled House bill would:

— Establish a \$600,000 spending limit for House candidates.

— Make television and radio time and mailing privileges available at reduced costs to those candidates who abide by the spending limits.

— Restrict political action committee contributions and contributions from lobbyists.

— Ban soft money.

Soft money is the term used to describe contributions that are laundered through party organizations or other intermediaries to give candidates help that exceeds existing legal limits. At present special interests are able to make huge indirect payments to candidates; the record donation was \$2.5 million given by Amway to the Republican National Committee in 1994.

In the first half of 1995 Republican committees raised \$20.1 million, and Democratic committees raised \$10.4 million in soft money. It is not surprising, perhaps, that three tobacco companies — Philip Morris, RJR Nabisco, and Brown & Williamson — were the top three contributors to the Republicans.

It is not surprising because most Americans know this form of payoff is the only way a force such as the tobacco industry can keep itself in the good graces of politicians. Deprived of their legal right to bribe, tobacco lobbyists are left with their pathetic deceptions. Similarly, lobbyists of all persuasions should have to make their cases through the force of their ideas rather than by the profligacy of their contributions.

There are plenty of special interests who will get to work in the coming months to derail the movement toward campaign finance reform. And a realistic view suggests that with so much money sloshing around Washington, passage of the bill could merely end up diverting the flow of money to some other, now unforeseen, outlet.

But the American people will be watching to see whether the present leadership will make the effort to clean up the process and, in so doing, restore confidence that decisions of state are made with the interest of the people in mind rather than the interests of the members' campaign funds.

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EDITORIALS

NOVEMBER 5, 1995 A-12

Can this be real?

Congress pushes campaign-finance reform

Lo, there seems to have been a dawning on Capitol Hill that Americans aren't proud of having the best Congress money can buy. A hush fell last week on the congressional counting houses as identical, strong campaign-finance-reform bills with bipartisan sponsorship began to move through the legislative process.

Could this be it? The kind of reform that would free representatives and senators from spending half their time soliciting campaign contributions? The kind of reform that would end the dominance of well-beeled interest groups, intensified this year with lobbyists invited to draft their own bills in the office of House Speaker Newt Gingrich?

Common Cause, the self-styled "citizens lobby," has campaigned for nearly two decades to limit the campaign contributions of the proliferating political action committees (PACs) in Washington. Its president, Ann McBride, called the identical House and Senate bills "an extraordinary breakthrough."

The House bill is sponsored by Republican Reps. Linda Smith of Washington, Christopher Shays of Connecticut and Democrat Marty Meehan of Massachusetts. In the Senate the legislation was introduced by Republican Sens. John McCain of Arizona and Fred Thompson of Tennessee and Democratic Sen. Russell Feingold of Wisconsin. The bills propose some heavy lifting.

They would ban "soft money" collected by national parties and channeled to state organizations to avoid statutory contribution limits. Republicans and Democrats together raised a disgusting \$30.5 million in "soft money" during the first six months of this year — with tobacco companies leading the parade of contributors.

THE BILLS WOULD LIMIT PACs TO THE SAME \$1,000 contributions individuals are allowed for each primary and general election. They would set a \$600,000 spending limit for House races and Senate caps ranging from \$950,000 to \$5.5 million, depending on the population of the state involved.

Candidates who accepted the spending caps would be entitled to some free television air time and more at half off a station's commercial rates. That's a particularly significant reform for New Jersey candidates who often must buy air time in two of the most expensive TV markets, New York and Pennsylvania. It could nearly halve the cost of statewide campaigns.

But discounted air time is bunk. The public owns the broadcast airwaves; broadcasters are merely allowed to use them under licenses to earn profits. Congress should summon the courage to set fixed amounts of totally free television and radio air time for candidates who comply with these proposed spending limits.

Citizens are entitled to view these bills with skepticism born of the many games played over the years with campaign-finance reform — between the houses of Congress and between a Congress ruled by one party and a president of the other. It's been a conspiracy to preserve an increasingly corrupt status quo.

If these bills, despite their great promise, also head south, it will be time for N.J. Reps. Bob Franks and Bob Torricelli to revive their bill to create an independent commission to propose reforms that Congress would have to approve or reject without the opportunity to eviscerate them with amendments.

In substance, these bills are the real thing. So those who vote against them will do so out of cupidity and at their peril.

OUR POSITION

Identical House and Senate campaign-finance-reform bills are sound and deserve approval by what has become the best Congress money can buy.

NOV 5, 1995

P5564

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

CAMPAIGN REFORM

Bringing it back from the dead

WONDER of wonders: There may be actual movement on Capital Hill toward campaign-finance reform.

"Something really is going to happen this Congress," exudes Ann McBride, president of Common Cause, which has lobbied for years to reduce the polluting influence of special-interest and political-action-committee money in the political process.

McBride's optimism may be premature. Next year, after all, is a presidential and congressional election year. Federal lawmakers have never shown a strong willingness to unfeather their own nests.

Still, there's actually a campaign-reform bill that is actually undergoing hearings in the House of Representatives. The measure is pushed by freshmen legislators, many of whom campaigned on a reform platform, and they are threatening rebellion if con-

gressional leaders resort to their usual tricks to block serious consideration of proposed changes.

More important, Congress can't help but notice, via opinion surveys, that the public is in a mood to rebel if Washington continues to stall on limiting the role of money in politics.

The freshmen's initiative has picked up bipartisan support from some senior lawmakers, and has at least gained the attention of congressional nabobs Newt Gingrich and Bob Dole.

On Thursday, House Speaker Gingrich asked President Clinton to join him in creating a bipartisan commission to address not only campaign-finance reform, but also broader matters such as the decline of political parties.

Another study commission? That won't satisfy the pledge to get on with reform, made this past summer by Gingrich and Clinton at a joint appearance in New Hampshire.

Meanwhile, Senate Majority Leader Dole has asked aides to draft reform legislation that can be introduced on the Senate side.

Momentum is no guarantee, of course, that campaign-finance reform won't end up — again — at a dead end. But it's a lot better than standing still.

THE ROANOKE TIMES

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N1028

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

The reform two-step

A new "commission" to study campaign finance reform is a dodge

There's absolutely no need now for House Speaker Newt Gingrich's bipartisan commission to study reform of the way federal election campaigns are financed.

There may have been some benefit more than four months ago when he and President Bill Clinton first agreed to form the commission. But now, with real bipartisan campaign reform bills already on the slate in both the House and Senate, it looks more like a Gingrich stall.

Otherwise, why did the speaker wait for months (until after tough, bipartisan bills were introduced) before moving forward with the commission idea? And Gingrich's commission wouldn't report back until May 1996, too late to pass reform bills before next year's elections.

Congress has been debating campaign finance reform for years. The honorables know what they need to do.

In the House, Reps. Linda Smith, R-Washington, Chris Shays, R-Conn., and Martin Meehan, D-Mass., have already put together a campaign finance reform bill that has all the right elements.

It establishes candidate spending limits. It reduces special-interest influence by restricting political action committee contributions, large individual contributions and contributions from lobbyists. And it bans so-called soft money. The Senate version, sponsored by Sens. John McCain, R-Ariz., Fred Thompson, R-Tenn., and Russell Feingold, D-Wis., is

virtually identical.

Alabama's nine-member congressional delegation should sign on.

Both bills set up voluntary spending limits. In return for staying within the limits, candidates will get reduced-rate television and radio advertising time and discounted postage.

The amount any one PAC could contribute would be reduced from \$5,000 to \$1,000 per election. That's means for a primary and general election combined, a PAC could contribute a total of \$2,000 to a candidate, the same as an individual is allowed to contribute.

Most important, "soft money" would be banned outright. Soft money is contributions given to national political parties by corporations, unions and wealthy individuals to dodge limits on contributions they can make to individual candidates. The national parties funnel the money to state parties which, in turn, can help the candidates running for House and Senate from their states.

Already this year (and it's not even an election year) more than \$30 million in soft money has been given to the national political parties.

Gingrich doesn't need a "commission" to work on campaign finance reform. He simply needs to look at the bill in his own House, sponsored in part by his own colleagues, to begin solving the problem of too much big money and too little democracy.

Johnson City, TN
PRESS
Johnson City—Kingsport—Bristol
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P5046

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Johnson City Press

WHAT THE PEOPLE DON'T KNOW WILL HURT THEM

Opinion

Finance reform needed

Almost everyone agrees that some sort of campaign finance reform is needed in our federal government to end the influence that money has on legislation.

A bipartisan group of House members — Reps. Linda Smith (R-Wash), Christopher Shays (R-Conn) and Marty Meehan (D-Mass) — introduced a bill on Oct. 25. It calls for comprehensive campaign finance reform — and parallels a Senate bill introduced back in September by our state's own Sen. Fred Thompson and Sens. John McCain, (R-Ariz) and Russell Feingold (D-Wis).

Certainly, these two measures, one in each house, can mean a breakthrough in the fight to clean up the corrupt campaign finance system which prevails in Washington.

No less a critic than Common Cause describes the Senate bill as "fair, tough, creative and comprehensive." Of both bills, Common Cause President Ann McBride says, "This is an extraordinary breakthrough. This bipartisan group of committed representatives and senators have set aside partisan differences, resisted internal pressures and are acting on behalf of

the overwhelming majority of Americans who are demanding — in ever increasing numbers — that Congress clean up its campaign finance system and end the influence money scandal that has corroded Washington."

A recent public opinion survey found that 87 percent of Americans favor limiting the amount of money candidates can spend on a political campaign. And 88 percent believe it will be effective to reduce the amount of money special-interest groups can contribute to a candidate.

These two bills, one in each house, would seem to meet those objectives. The Senate bill sets voluntary spending limits based on a state's population, from \$950,000 in smaller states to \$5.5 million in California. The House bill sets a limit of \$600,000 on House candidates.

And it's the first time ever that senators and representatives have banded together to support the same reform legislation.

We would urge Upper Tennesseans to encourage Sen. Thompson and to tell Sen. Frist and Congressman Quillen that these bills are a must in the current session of Congress.

Newt Gingrich, politics and money

Like many politicians, House Speaker Newt Gingrich says that the current system of financing political campaigns needs to be reformed. But the speaker has a curious view of what reform means.

"One of the greatest myths of modern politics is campaigns are too expensive," Gingrich told a House task force last week. "The political process, frankly, is underfunded, it is not overfunded."

Now that is indeed a novel argument. Most voters would no doubt be surprised to learn that the problem with American democracy is a shortage of money to buy those uplifting, highly informative 30-second "hit pieces" that clog the airwaves come election time.

But that's apparently what the speaker is contending. In his comments before the task force, he cited the combined advertising budget for three popular antacids — Pepcid AC, Tagamet and Zantac — and compared it with the total spent on political advertising.

"Advertising for three antacids is \$300 million," Gingrich told the task force. "The total congressional spending for all 435 House seats and 33 Senate seats was \$600 million. It was the equivalent of two antacid campaigns. And yet we're told politics is too expensive."

Furthermore, Gingrich said, those who are worried about the role of money in politics are motivated by "a nonsensical socialist analysis based on hatred of the free-enterprise system."

Whew.

The man can talk, can't he? He strings words together like they were so many firecrackers, making a lot of noise in the process but not much sense.

The truth is, many good Americans who believe deeply in the free-enterprise system also believe that certain things should not be for sale to the highest bidder. Among those things would be their elected representatives.

Let's look again at Gingrich's comparison. The \$300 million spent on antacid advertising was raised honorably, by selling antacids. Congressional candidates, on the other hand, had to raise their millions by begging lobbyists and special interests for donations. The more money they needed to raise, the more they had to beg. And the more they had to beg, the more vulnerable they became to those who want something in return for their money.

Gingrich apparently thinks there's nothing wrong with that. It is, after all, the free-enterprise system at work. The lobbyists give politicians money; the politicians give the lobbyists what they want in return. Why, anybody who would criticize that transaction must be a socialist.

Not quite. For the first time in recent history, reformers from both houses of Congress and from both political parties have united behind a single piece of campaign-finance legislation. The coalition includes some of the most conservative people in Congress, and they are pressing hard for a vote on their proposal.

The coalition's bill would put spending limits on congressional races, ban or at least limit special-interest PAC money, limit lobbyist donations to \$100 and require candidates to raise at least 60 percent of their money from within their district or state. That would be real reform.

NOV 7, 1995

N5584

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

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"Soft money" is the term used to describe contributions that are laundered through party organizations or other intermediaries to give candidates help that exceeds existing legal limits. Special interests are able to make huge indirect payments to candidates; the record donation was \$2.5 million given by Amway to the Republican National Committee in 1994.

In the first half of 1995, Republican committees raised \$20.1 million, and Democratic committees raised \$10.4 million in soft money. Three tobacco companies — Philip Morris, RJR Nabisco, and Brown & Williamson — were the top three contributors to the Republicans.

It is hardly surprising that the tobacco lobby would donate so heavily because most Americans know this form of payoff is the only way an industry with such a poor public record can keep itself in the good graces of politicians.

Deprived of their legal right to bribe, tobacco lobbyists are left with their pathetic deceptions. Similarly, lobbyists of all persuasions should have to make their cases through the force of their ideas rather than by the profligacy of their contributions.

There are plenty of special interests who will try to derail the movement toward campaign finance reform. And a realistic view suggests that with so much money sloshing around Washington, passage of the bill could merely end up diverting the flow of money to some other, now unforeseen, outlet.

But the American people will be watching to see whether the current leadership will make the effort to clean up the process. Indeed, that's the only way to guarantee that decisions of state are based on the public interest, rather than on the desire for money.

Los Angeles, CA
TIMES
Los Angeles—Long Beach
Met Area

Tuesday D 1.242.884

NOV 7, 1995

P1328

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

Campaign Reform Roadblocks

After agreeing with the President, Gingrich seems to be stalling

Politicians are forced to dial for dollars because money is the lifeblood of politics, with billions collected and spent each year in the pursuit of office. In a time when campaign finance reform is sorely needed, House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) is putting up obstacles. His recent proposal to form a bipartisan commission to study the issue until next May would prevent timely progress.

Gingrich also would set an impossibly high hurdle in the form of a two-thirds vote by the commission to send recommendations on to Congress. A simple majority of the panel should prevail, and the sooner the mechanism is in place the better for Americans who worry that their elected officials can be bought and sold.

What's taking so long? Gingrich and President Clinton agreed during a June meeting in New Hampshire to set up a campaign finance reform commission. They shook on it, an encouraging sign in this bitterly partisan era. Clinton has since asked Gingrich to get on board, but to no avail.

Bipartisanship is needed to change the rules governing how much money a candidate can collect and from whom, as well as how much a candidate can spend. A Senate bill, proposed by Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Russell D. Feingold (D-Wis.), calls for voluntary spending limits and would reward complying candidates with discounted TV and radio broadcast time. This bipartisan bill also would forbid the bundling of contributions to get around rules

and ban PACs, if the courts agreed. The legislation merits speedy passage, but that's unlikely.

On the House side, Linda Smith (R-Wash.), in concert with a bipartisan coalition, supports banning PACs, eliminating large corporate and union contributions, and limiting overall campaign spending. She's on the right track.

Democrats are no less to blame than Republicans for the lack of progress. Former House Speaker Thomas S. Foley (D-Wash.)—who subsequently lost his reelection bid—delayed reform last year.

Gingrich complained loud and often about campaign finance rules when his party was out of power. Now, he seems to support the same old political money business.

NOV 7, 1995

P5650

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

Pass campaign reforms, not another task force

HOUSE Speaker Newt Gingrich is right to call for a bipartisan approach to campaign-finance reform. But he misses the boat by proposing a task force to study it for another year or so.

As Gingrich procrastinates, freshman Rep. Linda Smith has co-sponsored a legitimately bipartisan campaign-finance bill endorsed by members of both parties and by independent voices ranging from Common Cause to the League of Women Voters and Ross Perot.

That doesn't mean Smith's approach is perfect. Regulating campaigns requires a delicate balancing of individual free speech and the broader public interest. Allowing interest groups or individuals to "buy" political campaigns works against the public interest; but overly strict limits on contributions inhibit citizens' rights to participate in the political process.

Midway between national elections, polls show most Americans believe the system favors special interests. And they have a point. Republicans already have banked \$20 million in soft money for the 1996 campaign, including \$3 million from the oil and tobacco lobbies. Democrats have lured \$10 million, much of it from lawyers and labor unions.

The Smith-Meehan-Shays Bill, similar to the McCain-Feingold Bill in the Senate, would:

- Establish a voluntary spending limit of \$600,000 for House candidates.
- Require that 60 percent of their donations come from their home state.
- Reward candidates who cooperate with cut-rate ads and mailings.
- Reduce the influence of political action committees, or "PACs."
- Prohibit soft money and bundling, devices used by interest groups to bypass existing campaign-finance laws.

Campaign reform has been studied to death by both parties. Each study raises legitimate questions, with few answers. The most dramatic reform — public financing of campaigns — is unacceptable to most taxpayers.

As Smith says in support of the bill, reform proposals have been "buried under efforts to pass the perfect bill." Whatever the intent, another commission serves to perpetuate a status quo that gnaws at the credibility of the political process.

It's time to bring this plan to the floor, debate and amend it, and then see if the resulting compromise can strike a better balance between the interests of politicians and the people they serve.

Too little, too late

Last week, four months after he and President Clinton shook hands in New Hampshire on an agreement to create a bipartisan commission on campaign finance reform, House Speaker Newt Gingrich finally aired his ideas on the matter. Appearing before a House committee, he suggested that Mr. Clinton and House Democrats choose eight members of the commission, while he and Sen. Bob Dole, the Senate majority leader, would choose eight more. Any proposal getting at least 11 votes in the commission would go directly to the floor of Congress for votes on the entire plan.

It's a reasonable enough formula. If the speaker had unveiled it immediately after New Hampshire, it would have prevailed. But much has happened while Mr. Gingrich's thoughts on campaign reform were marinating. Now his move looks very much like the stall it has been labeled by one of his own conservative firebrands, Rep. Linda Smith, R-Wash., who has emerged as a leader of her freshman class on election issues. The move is all the more suspicious because the agenda—Mr. Gingrich proposes for the commission is a sweeping one that would go well beyond the top-priority issues of campaign spending and lobbying.

What has happened in the interim is the first serious bipartisan campaign reform effort in a decade — and the first ever in which representatives and senators have joined together in support of the same basic legislation. The leaders in the Senate are Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., Russell Feingold, D-Wis., and Fred Thompson, R-Tenn.; in the House, the sponsors are Rep. Smith, along with Reps. Christopher Shays, R-Conn., and Marty Meehan, D-Mass. Here's what their bills would do:

- Establish spending limits for congressional candidates — \$800,000 in the House and \$950,000 to \$5.5 million in the Senate, depending on the size of the state.
- Provide free or reduced-cost air time and cut-rate mailings for candidates who abide by the spending limits.
- Ban special-interest political action committees (PACs), with a fallback provision strictly limiting PAC contributions in case the Supreme Court forbade a total PAC prohibition.
- End the "soft money" system under which both national party committees raise enormous sums that are funneled to state parties in order to evade federal laws that regulate the size and sources of political contributions. The soft money comes from corporations and unions, which are barred from directly contributing to federal campaigns, and from wealthy individuals, and in sums that far exceed federal limits.

This legislation represents real reform — bipartisan and bicameral. It will do the job: Common Cause, the League of Women Voters and Ross Perot all agree on that. It's ready to go. It needs no time-consuming commission to work it over.

If the American people want nothing else out of Congress this term, they want the campaign funding and lobbying systems fixed. They know that special-interest fatcats don't lavish tens of thousands of dollars on politicians and parties out of civic high-mindedness. They know what's in the Packwood diaries and how candidly those pages bore witness to the influence-peddling culture of Capitol Hill. They know how the need for continuous fund-raising drains the time and dignity of their elected representatives. They want a change.

And the sponsors of the House and Senate bills want to give it to them, quickly. Rep. Smith and her colleagues have laid down some deadlines for the House leadership: a full House vote on gift and lobby reform legislation by Thanksgiving; hearings and floor votes on campaign finance reform in both the House and Senate no later than February. Any holdup, they said, will lead to a discharge petition, by which 218 members can lift a bill from committee and bring it to the floor.

Speaker Gingrich now offers a commission. It's too little, too late. A parade is forming, and he might want to consider running to the head of it before it tramples him.

Awaiting the speaker

Congress has one more chance to pass meaningful campaign-finance reform before spring brings presidential primaries and members of Congress hit the fund-raising road. The reform issue has been debated for years, and a worthy bill currently is in the House. Speaker Newt Gingrich's response to this, unfortunately, has been to appoint a commission to study the matter.

This is the same tactic used by the previous speaker, Thomas Foley, who avoided four or five attempts to overhaul the system that allows special interests to buy access to politicians by funding their campaigns. Both speakers announced their strong intention to clean up this system, but then found that being the object of affection for so many lobbyists was too difficult to overcome.

Last June at a public forum, Speaker Gingrich and President Clinton shook hands over an agreement to form a commission that would present to the House a base-closing-style campaign reform, in which members could vote up or down on the package without amending it. Instead, the speaker has formed a commission with eight Republicans and eight Democrats that required *two-thirds* agreement, instead of a simple majority, on each issue for the up or down vote to occur. The tougher requirement could prevent such a vote from ever taking place.

Campaign-finance reform doesn't require more months of talk. Voters are aware that members of Congress depend heavily on single, large donations, often channeled through political parties, and are outspending challengers by record amounts. No matter which party is in power, the problem is the same: The public must persuade Congress to clean up the campaign system.

The proposal in the House is a decent bipartisan attempt to do that. H.R. 2566, sponsored by Republicans Linda Smith and Christopher Shays and Democrat Martin Meehan, would ban soft money, limit or eliminate PAC contributions, establish spending limits and offer a discount on television and radio time for candidates who voluntarily comply with the restrictions. It would also remove some of the advantages of being an incumbent — banning use of the frank for mass mailings in election years and ending the use of campaign funds for personal use.

A similarly strong, bipartisan bill was introduced in September in the Senate. But House action could be delayed interminably by the speaker's commission. Especially considering that Rep. Gingrich rode to power decrying the Democrats' out-of-touch policies, he shouldn't be allowed to let campaign-finance reform die now. Members of both parties are willing to support substantial improvement in the way campaigns are financed. He should join them.

Nashville, TN
Tennessean
Nashville Met Area

Friday

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NOV 10, 1995

N5084

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

Gingrich ducks out on campaign bill

THERE are many problems that Congress doesn't know how to resolve. Campaign finance reform isn't one of them.

A bill introduced in the House and Senate would wring much of the money out of congressional campaigns, squeezing particularly hard at special interest money.

Best yet, the bill is bi-partisan, being sponsored in the Senate by John McCain, R-Ariz., and Russell Feingold, D-Wis., and in the House by Christopher Shays, R-Wis., Linda Smith, R-Wash., and several Democrats. First termers in the House and Senate are particularly anxious to get this legislation to the floor for a vote.

Unfortunately, the bill faces a rather formidable roadblock in the person of House Speaker Newt Gingrich. Gingrich has never ranked campaign finance reform high on his agenda. He came into office last January promoting a whole slew of reforms, but campaign finance reform was not among them. Last June, Gingrich and President Clinton agreed to name a bi-partisan commission to work on campaign finance reform. That commission has yet to be named.

And last week, feeling the heat from House freshmen, Gingrich offered a new proposal. He told the House Committee on Reform and Oversight that a bi-partisan commission should be named, but that the commission should examine such matters as the media's role in campaigns and the growing number of candidates who are "millionaires and billionaires." In an extremely telling remark the speaker also said, "One of the great myths of modern politics in that campaigns are too expensive. The political process is, in fact, underfunded. It is not overfunded."

If Gingrich's dancing around on this issue looks familiar, it should. This is exactly the same kind of deny-and-delay-tactics that former speaker Tom Foley

Measure would reduce incumbents' advantage

used to pull to keep from bringing campaign reform up for a vote.

And Gingrich has the same goal that Foley had: protection of incumbents — most of whom are now Republicans.

The bill is an extremely measured and thoughtful package. It would require that 60% of a candidate's contributions come from the candidate's home state. It would ban contributions from political action committees; if the courts ruled that banning PAC money was unconstitutional, then the bill would restrict PAC contributions to \$1,000.

Lobbyists would be limited to contributions of \$100. So-called "soft money" contributions that now come into party coffers by the barrelful from corporations and unions would be banned. Candidates who agree to voluntary spending limits would get breaks on television time and postage.

Gingrich can pursue a commission if he wants, but he shouldn't use a commission as an excuse to delay a vote on the reform bill now in hand. If Congress waits much longer to act on this measure, the legislation will be dragged into the campaign season. Lawmakers, instead of looking at the bill objectively, will be trying to assess how it would affect them in their particular races.

Congress doesn't need a commission on campaign finance reform. It just needs leadership that will let this impressive bill come up for a vote. Gingrich has bragged considerably on the various reform measures he has shepherded through the House. He should realize, however, that without campaign finance reform, all the other measures look pretty shabby. ■

NOV 11, 1995

N1688

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

EDITORIALS

Get out of the way, Newt

In June, House Speaker Newt Gingrich and President Clinton both promised to create a commission on political reform. They shook hands on the deal.

For five months, despite the president's frequent expressions of interest, nothing happened. House Republican leaders said they were too busy with other matters to get things moving on the regulation of lobbyists and campaign finance.

But recently, House Majority Leader Dick Armey said there would be votes this year on lobbying reform and a gift-ban rule. He said committee work on campaign-finance reform would also begin. Then last week, Mr. Gingrich let it be known that he wants a commission.

It's too late. This supposedly revolutionary speaker has seized on a delaying tactic by proposing further study. He should have joined Mr. Clinton months ago in setting up the panel. Now he should just get out of the way and let reformers in his own party — such as Reps. Christopher Shays of Connecticut and Linda Smith of Washington — and like-minded Democrats try to push through legislation they have introduced.

Mr. Shays and Ms. Smith, together with Democrat Martin Meehan of Massachusetts, have proposed meaningful campaign-finance reform that

seems to be gathering bipartisan support. A similar bill has been introduced in the Senate, co-sponsored by Democrat Christopher J. Dodd of Connecticut.

Here's some of what the Shays-Smith-Meehan bill provides:

- No more campaign contributions from political action committees.
- A limit on the amount of money that can be raised from fat cats.
- A requirement that at least 60 percent of donations be made from within a candidate's state.
- No more "soft money" — contributions to party committees that are meant to benefit candidates.
- A limit on donations from lobbyists.
- A ban on bundling, or accumulating individual contributions within an interest group and presenting it in one large check.
- A ban on the use of campaign funds for personal purposes.

The House and Senate proposals do not — but should — include a public-financing component. But it is a good start. Mr. Gingrich should catch up with the reform parade led by others. It is time to change a political system corrupted by money.

OUR VIEWS

Milwaukee, WI
Journal Sentinel
Milwaukee Met Area

Welcome move toward campaign cleanup

The smelly Sen. Bob Packwood (R-Ore.), his career ruined by disclosures of sexual harassment, evidence tampering and abuse of power, has announced his resignation. If Packwood's colleagues are as outraged by this scandal as they claim, they will do something about campaign finance reform, an issue the Packwood affair illuminated. Sen. Russ Feingold (D-Wis.) has announced a worthy proposal that would help achieve that goal.

Packwood's diary entries revealed the possibility that \$100,000 was illegally diverted to his 1992 re-election campaign by Sen. Phil Gramm (R-Tex.), then chairman of a GOP fund-raising committee. Both Gramm and Packwood have denied any wrongdoing, but there can be no doubt of the need to produce more accountability for "soft money" — funds that are sup-

posed to be used by state party organizations for general purposes (like get-out-the-vote drives) rather than for specific candidates.

This soft-money problem, plus many other campaign shortcomings, are addressed in Feingold's proposal, which he introduced with two Republican sponsors, Sen. John McCain of Arizona and Sen. Fred Thompson of Tennessee.

Among other things, it would limit soft-money contributions and require that all receipts be reported to the Federal Election Commission. Common Cause, the public interest group that has long sought reforms in soft-money contributions, calls the Feingold measure "fair, tough, creative and comprehensive."

The proposal also provides incentives for senatorial candidates to accept spending limits on their campaigns — free television time, for

example. Also included are incentives for senatorial candidates to spend no more than \$250,000 of their own funds in a campaign, a measure designed to prevent wealthy politicians from virtually buying seats of power. The Feingold measure requires candidates to raise 60% of their campaign funds from inside their own states.

Campaign finance reform has not fared well in previous sessions of Congress. But Feingold says the mood has changed in recent years, and he also points to the bipartisan support his measure has attracted. Revulsion over the Packwood scandal may also prompt Congress to get off the dime on this issue. If Congress is serious about cleansing the smell from campaign financing, it will enact this common-sense, overdue reform.

John A. Lynch, Publisher
Charles M. Anderson, Executive Editor
John H. Meyer, Managing Editor
Charles W. Riesz, Jr., Editorial Page Editor

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OUR VIEWS

Campaign cleanup gets serious effort

It's a little late in the season, but maverick congressmen from both parties are pushing a serious effort at campaign reform, and they seem to be gaining momentum.

People who care about good government should be cheering them on.

In the House, Republicans Christopher Shays of Connecticut and Linda Smith of Washington joined Democrat Marty Meehan of Massachusetts to introduce a major reform bill last month.

Their bill parallels a Senate effort backed by Republicans John McCain of Arizona and Fred Thompson of Tennessee, plus Democrat Russell Feingold of Wisconsin.

The two bills differ in specifics, but basically contain the same intriguing ideas.

Both would set a voluntary limit on how much candidates can spend while running for the Senate and House. (The Senate limit would vary according to the state's population.)

As a carrot to abide by those limits, candidates who spend less than the maximum would get free or cut-rate advertising time on television. That's especially important in Senate races, where TV commercials account for nearly half a candidate's expenses.

In addition, both bills would sharply limit with "soft-money" contributions.

Some big-money donors have sidestepped campaign limits by giving huge sums (up to \$100,000) to either of the two parties. Ostensibly, this money is supposed to go for such activities as encouraging people to register and vote. In practice, the money is usually fun-

neled into state party organizations and used in congressional races in which the donor has an interest.

The reformers would also put tighter limits on donations by political action committees (PACs) and would try to outlaw "bundling," a practice by which PACs evade spending limits by pooling contributions to specific candidates.

All these ideas are long overdue.

Political races cost too much as it is. The present PAC-dominated funding system has given incumbents a near-insurmountable advantage in most elections — one reason that Democrats were able to keep their majority in the House for 40 years straight.

It also gives undue influence to interest groups with lots of money to spend — often, groups that to make even more money from tax breaks, subsidies or other action by Congress.

Once again, however, the leadership in both parties seems to like things the way they are.

Last week, House Speaker Newt Gingrich suddenly seemed to recall his five-month old promise to Bill Clinton to set up a commission to study campaign spending.

But launching a commission now would effectively rule out any chance of action on campaign reform this year, and probably next year as well.

There's no need for more study. Rep. Gingrich knows the problems with the PAC system; he used to complain about them, before he was in position to reap their benefits.

If he and other Honorables are serious about cleaner campaigning, they should move to pass the reform bills before them.

Perspective



REPORT

Campaign reformers try another push

By Andrew Mollison

Washington — Undaunted by two decades of defeats, campaign-reform proponents this month are launching another bid to change the way Americans pay for congressional campaigns.

"Things are different this year," said Ann McBride, president of Common Cause. "You have the first bipartisan bill in a decade, and for the first time ever, you have a bicameral approach — senators and representatives coming together on the same bill."

Skeptics abound. "Maybe I've become cynical after all the failures, but it seems to me it's bound to founder in Congress on account of a combination of ideology and self-interest," said Linda Fowler, professor of government at Dartmouth College.

McBride shrugged off that view. "What you see in this Congress is that issues like lobby disclosure that 'could never be passed' have been passed. That gives people hope," she said.

Equally undaunted, politicians are continuing to raise money the old-fashioned way — in big chunks in Washington from people who want to get closer to them than most ordinary voters can afford.

Last month, Republicans criticized President Clinton for vetoing a bill opposed by most trial lawyers shortly after he held a White House dinner for hundreds of Democratic donors — some of them trial lawyers who had given Democrats as much as \$100,000.

"It is difficult to escape the conclusion that Bill Clinton's veto got bought," said Haley Barbour, chairman of the Republican National Committee.

This month, Republicans will be doing much the same thing on the nights before and after Clinton's State of the Union address, scheduled for Jan. 23.

The Monday Morning Political Action Committee has promised that donors who pay \$4,000 extra for a \$1,000-per-person reception Jan. 22 can pose for a photograph with the new PAC's chairman, House Speaker Newt Gingrich. Money used by Gingrich's PAC to support GOP House candidates won't count against limits on how much their party can give to them.

Additionally, Barbour hopes the Republicans will raise a record-breaking \$15 million Jan. 24 at a gala so big that it is being held in the National Building Museum and D.C. Armory, two of the capital's largest venues.

Barbour is charging donors \$250,000 to be named a co-chairman of the gala (which entitles them to four tickets to next summer's convention plus lunch with Gingrich and Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole); \$150,000 to be named a vice chairman (two convention tickets); or \$45,000 to be named a deputy chairman (breakfast with Gingrich).

Such large gifts would be illegal

Please see **REFORM, C4** ▶

Andrew Mollison is a reporter in the Cox Washington bureau.

Campaign reform: Bipartisan measure has the best chance

► Continued from C1

under many of the more than 40 campaign finance bills introduced in Congress in the past year.

The bill with the best chance of passing is the one endorsed by Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, Ralph Nader's Public Citizen and Ross Perot of United We Stand America.

In addition to outlawing big gifts to political parties, that bill is intended to limit congressional candidates' spending and their fund-raising from PACs and other nonconstituents. To comply with court rulings against mandatory spending limits, the bill instead mandates discounts on mailings and broadcast time for candidates who observe the limits voluntarily.

Proponents will start the public portion of their drive for support Jan. 20 at town meetings sponsored in Concord, Mass., by Rep. Martin Meehan (D-Mass.) and in Concord, N.H., by the Center for a New Democracy and the Franklin Pierce Law Center.

The meetings will offer New Englanders from early presidential primary states a chance to rub shoulders with Perot, talk show host Phil Donahue and other celebrities. One difference from the usual political fund-raising events: Admission will be free.

Meehan, a liberal, joined conservative Rep. Christopher Shays (R-Conn.) and very conservative Rep. Linda Smith (R-Wash.) in introducing the House version of the bill.

"Traditionally, Democrats opposed any limits or bans on PACs and Republicans opposed any limit on overall spending. Neither party gets an advantage if we do both at once," Meehan said. "Of course, the opposite problem is that everyone has an excuse to vote against it."

The Senate version was introduced by conservative Republican John McCain of Arizona, liberal Democrat Russ Feingold of Wisconsin and first-term Republican Fred Thompson of Tennessee.

"The amount of opposition is ample testimony to the strength of this bill," McCain said. "I'm not predicting passage this year; I'm just saying that sooner or later this bill, or one very much like it, will pass."

"Sen. McCain and I can force this issue to the Senate floor as an amendment to other legislation," Feingold said. "In the House, they've talked about using a discharge petition," in which more than half the members

Bill highlights

Main provisions of campaign finance proposals

■ Voluntary limits are set for House and Senate candidates on spending, self-funding and funds raised outside the candidate's district or state.

■ Candidates who abide by the voluntary limits get lower filing rates plus a combination of free TV time and discounts on mailings. Senate candidates get mailings plus discounts on broadcast TV and radio.

■ Contributions from political action committees (PACs) are banned. If a ban is ruled unconstitutional, fallback provisions would tighten restrictions on PAC gifts.

■ National parties could no longer funnel money to state parties from special "soft money" accounts. Those accounts currently are exempt from federal limits on money from a single source and exempt from a federal ban on money from corporate or union treasuries.

■ A person or PAC "bundling" checks from several persons and giving them to a federal candidate would have the same contribution limits as a person or PAC that raises money from several persons and writes one check for the candidate.

Source: Sponsors' summaries of S. 1219, introduced by Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.); Russell Feingold (D-Wis.) and Fred Thompson (R-Tenn.), and H.R. 2566, introduced by Reps. Linda Smith (R-Wash.), Christopher Shays (R-Conn.) and Martin Meehan (D-Mass.). The bills have been endorsed by Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, Ralph Nader's Public Citizen and Ross Perot.

call for a floor vote on a bill, "which is much more difficult."

In both chambers, "the key is public pressure," said Shays. "In the next four weeks, we will work with the grass-roots groups to do whatever we can to help shore it up."

Houston, TX
CHRONICLE
Houston - Brazoria
Met Area

Wednesday D 413.717

SEP 13, 1995

P5260

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

MONEY AND SHAME

Packwood proved need for campaign finance reform

Sen. Bob Packwood's diaries disgusted many Americans with their juvenile accounts of sexual conquests and dalliances. At least as disturbing are the diary passages that recount the corrupting mix of lobbyists, favors and campaign cash at the heart of the way the U.S. Senate does business.

The disgraced Packwood confesses in his diaries that he granted people and companies substantial tax breaks in exchange for campaign contributions, expensive entertainments and the companionship of wealthy lobbyists. Packwood's political methods and almost casual disregard for the public interest were not unique, and few of his colleagues in the Senate and on the powerful Finance Committee he chaired have seen fit to condemn such behavior.

Recognizing that the corrupting influence of campaign contributions extends beyond Bob Packwood, Sens. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Russell Feingold, D-Wis., have introduced legislation to encourage voluntary spending limits on senatorial campaigns.

Candidates who agreed to limit their spending according to the size of the state would receive broadcast time and postage at reduced rates. The voluntary formula would also limit personal spending by candidates with little to recommend them but their own or family fortunes.

The legislation would ban contributions from political action committees. These special interest PACs take advantage of candidates' desperate need for cash in order to influence the writing of legislation.

The proposed bill would place stricter limits on so-called soft money contributions of the type discussed by Packwood and Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas. These huge contributions for party get-out-the-vote drives can find their way into individual federal campaigns, buying influence for the people and companies who gave them.

McCain and Feingold's bill is a long shot. At least the public will be able to judge senators' concerns for the Senate's integrity by the level of support for this legislation.

Washington, DC
Post
Washington DC Met Area

Thursday

D 840,232

SEP 21, 1995

N1740

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

Will the Freshmen Clean House?

ON THESE pages recently, Rep. Linda Smith, a first-term Republican from Washington, offered some good advice to her party's leadership. "We should put our PAC money where our mouth is and pass campaign and lobby reform now," she wrote. Her argument was straightforward: If the Republicans are really serious about changing things, political reform ought to be at the top of their list of measures. "You can't perform surgery in a dirty operating room and with a team that hasn't scrubbed," she wrote.

As it is—and Mrs. Smith is aware of this—her team needs a lot of scrubbing. Somehow, campaign and lobbying reform have never made it to the top of the party's list of "revolutionary" measures. Speaker Gingrich in particular talks a good reformist game on the odd day, but has mostly delayed and delayed. That could have something to do with the fact that the new majority is raising gobs of money from the political action committees. Rep. Smith's supposedly reform-minded freshman colleagues are at the head of the queue when it comes to such fund-raising: PAC contributions accounted for 45 percent—\$5 million—of the \$11 million raised by the 85 House freshmen in the first six months of 1995. Indeed, according to a study by Common Cause, this crop of freshmen is proving *more* adept at raising PAC money than its predecessors.

As for Mrs. Smith's own proposals, we sympathize with some but think that others need to be reshaped. She's right on stopping taxpayer-

paid mass mailings in an election year, in having the House join the Senate in banning free meals and gifts from lobbyists and in cleaning up the "soft money system." Her proposal to ban all PAC contributions is probably unconstitutional; there are constitutional ways to limit PACs. We are also skeptical of banning all contributions from outside a member's district.

We hope that Mrs. Smith and other reform-minded House Republicans—notably Rep. Christopher Shays (R-Conn.), who has been pleading for action on this issue all year—will take a cue from their colleague Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.). Mr. McCain has put together a plausible bipartisan proposal with Sen. Russ Feingold (D-Wis.) that includes some important elements that need to be part of any real reform. These include clear spending limits and both a limited amount of free television time and discounted TV time so candidates can make their case without spending a fortune. Our preference is for public financing of campaigns over free television, but the structure of the McCain-Feingold plan is right.

If the Republican leadership won't listen to Mrs. Smith's pleas, her freshman colleagues surely should. The Republican freshmen need to remember what happened to their Democratic counterparts in the last Congress: Despite the pleas of some of the more reform-minded newcomers, the Democratic leadership could never get its act together on this issue. The whole party suffered, but the freshmen, elected on a wave of reformist zeal, suffered most.

OCT 4, 1995

P5442

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

Editorial

Campaign Finance Bill Hailed As Breakthrough

One important thing Congress needed to do this session was improve its own image before the public, and a move in that direction might be seen in what is being called a breakthrough on campaign finance reform.

In what observers say is the first bipartisan breakthrough on the issue in more than a decade. Senators John McCain, R-Az., Russell Feingold, D, Wis. and Fred Thomason, R-Tenn., have joined to introduce a comprehensive campaign finance reform bill.

The joint effort could signify the end of partisan deadlocks that have plagued previous reform efforts, congressional analysts say.

The McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform bill is S. 1219, and it was introduced in the Senate in September.

This legislation "represents a critically important breakthrough in the fight to clean up the corrupt campaign finance system in Washington," said Ann McBride, president of Common Cause, an organization which has been in the forefront of the battle for such reform.

She called the McCain-Feingold bill "fair, tough, creative and comprehensive" and one that "promises real hope for reform in this Congress."

Introduction of S. 1219 follows on the heels of three major bipartisan reform victories in the Senate this year, it is noted. In May, the Senate voted to preserve the presidential campaign finance system. In July, the Senate voted to enact a comprehensive lobbyist gift ban for Senators, effective January 1, 1996. And in July, the Senate passed a resolution that commits it to act on campaign finance reform by the end of this Congress.

A companion measure to the McCain-Feingold legislation is expected to be introduced in the House by Reps. Chris Shays, R-Ct., and Martin Meehan, D-Ma.

In recent years, partisan deadlock and filibusters in the Senate have blocked enactment of comprehensive legislation, even though there is evidence of growing public support for reform, according to Common Cause.

The three Senate reform victories this summer, however, each were won through strong bipartisan support.

A bipartisan effort obviously provides strength to help push campaign finance reform. And possibly even more important, McBride said, it changes the dynamic on Capitol Hill and reform opponents no longer can resort to finger-pointing and accusations that campaign finance reform is strictly a partisan effort.

The bipartisan bill establishes voluntary spending limits for Senate candidates based on a state's voting age population. The limits range from \$950,000 in smaller states, like Wyoming, to \$5.5 million in the largest states, like California.

While \$5.5 million still may seem high, in 1994 spending in a California Senate race topped \$44.5 million, and Virginia's Robb-North campaign totaled \$26.4 million. Spending in eight Senate races in 1994 reached more than \$10 million. Candidates abiding by voluntary spending limits would be eligible to receive a specified amount of free television time and other benefits.

This proposal represents needed movement in the right direction on the recognized problem of campaign financing and the obligations that are certain to be felt from large contributions.

It still leaves a lot of room for the influence peddlers to stay in business, and is a long way from our long-standing proposal of a strict campaign contribution limit of \$1 per person per candidate.

Any significant progress on restoring some degree of restraint in political campaign financing should be applauded. But it should not put the public demand for even more reform to rest.

OCT 5, 1995

P5518

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

Senate sets pace

Although the House of Representatives is perceived as Capitol Hill's catalyst for change, the Senate has taken the lead in campaign finance reform.

Republican senators, John McCain of Arizona and Fred Thompson of Tennessee, have joined with Rep. Russell Feingold, a Wisconsin Democrat, to devise a campaign finance overhaul that will determine whether the GOP takeover of Congress brings genuine change or more business as usual.

The McCain-Feingold plan attempts to rein in a trend in campaign spending which is making it prohibitively expensive for all but the independently wealthy to run for office. California's last Senate race, for instance, was fueled by \$44 million.

The proposed reform won't force candidates to abide by its rules, but it makes an offer too good for most candidates to refuse. Candidates who follow the plan's spending limits, to be determined by a state's voting-age population, will receive free and discounted TV time.

The plan reduces the advantage of congressional incumbents by curbing the

franking privilege during election years, and limits the amount candidates can spend on their own campaigns. Perhaps the most appealing aspect of the reform is that candidates must raise 60 percent of their funds in their home districts. That will help close the door on inside-the-beltway influence peddling by special interests.

Common Cause President Ann McBride welcomed the proposed legislation as "the first bipartisan breakthrough on campaign finance reform in more than a decade." The proposal should also placate Ross Perot, whose new third party platform addresses influence-peddling in six of its nine planks.

The American public, 87 percent of whom favor limiting the amount of money candidates can spend, will be the greatest welcoming committee for the McCain-Feingold reform.

House Republicans have criticized the Senate's deliberate approach to reforming Washington.

But on the issue of campaign financing, the Senate is perched on the cutting edge of reform.

St. Louis, MO
Post-Dispatch
St. Louis Met Area

Thursday

D 332.713

OCT 5, 1995

N3432

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

Right Bill To Clean Up Campaigns

Last July the Senate passed a resolution committing itself to act on campaign-finance reform before the end of this Congress, or the fall of 1996. Last month, Sens. John McCain, Republican of Arizona, Russell Feingold, Democrat of Wisconsin, and Fred Thompson, Republican of Tennessee, filed the model of reform both the Senate and House should pass.

Their aim is a Senate vote by January and House action soon after. Democrats, who have been reluctant in the past to tackle campaign-finance reform, are increasingly recognizing its crucial importance, and Senate Republicans are beginning to understand that they ignore the issue at their peril.

Never has campaign-finance reform been more necessary. In 1976, spending by Senate winners averaged \$600,000; in 1994 the figure was \$4.5 million, with some races costing almost 10 times as much. Political action committee contributions continue to rise, and so-called soft money — contributed to state political parties for get-out-the-vote drives but frequently channeled to individual candidates — has reached multimillion-dollar figures.

The McCain bill addresses all these concerns. It would set voluntary spending limits for Senate can-

didates based on a state's voting age population, varying from just under \$1 million for small states to more than \$5 million for large states. Those who agree to abide by these limits would receive 30 minutes of free TV time and could buy more time at half the lowest rate 30 days before the primary and 60 days before the general election.

As well, those who abide by the spending limits would get a third-class bulk rate for two mailings to all state voters. PACs would be banned, or, if that prohibition is found unconstitutional, the total a candidate could take in PAC money would be limited to 20 per cent of the voluntary spending limit. PAC gifts would be also limited to \$1,000 per election, down from today's \$5,000. Soft-money contributions would be banned outright.

A measure similar to the McCain bill is expected to be introduced in the House soon. Last July, House Speaker Newt Gingrich and President Bill Clinton joined in pledging to appoint a commission to write a campaign-finance reform bill, but the speaker reneged. But if the Senate acts on the McCain-Feingold bill, perhaps the speaker will see the need to act. He certainly should.

OCT 31, 1995

P5636

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

► OUR VIEW

Time to clean house

Do we Americans dare get our hopes up that Congress will pass meaningful campaign finance reform by the first of the year?

For decades Congress has refused to clean up its act. As a result, the American public has lost faith in its elected leaders and a representative democracy.

Most Americans believe Congress is bought and paid for by special interests and that the voice of the common man is drowned out as a result of large campaign contributions from political action committees.

Members of the public bristle at the abuse of congressional franking privileges, and fume over the trips, gifts and special perks that members of Congress enjoy. Every time a national television show takes its hidden cameras to a luxurious resort to film lobbyists wining and dining members of Congress and their staff, the public's respect for government slips another notch.

Ignoring the public's growing anger, Speaker Newt Gingrich insists that campaign finance reform is not of interest to most Americans.

He's wrong!

Until Congress puts its house in order, Americans will view every piece of legislation with suspicion and disdain. It's a matter of credibility, and today Congress has none.

To restore confidence in government, Congress must change the way members are elected and also get rid of lobbying abuses.

Rep. Linda Smith, who represents Olympia and southwest Washington in Congress, has gained national recognition for her efforts to force a vote on campaign finance reform. As a personal commitment, Smith has announced that she will not accept campaign contributions from political action committees.

Smith's efforts have drawn the attention of other reform-minded members of Congress. A bipartisan group of senators and representatives joined last week with the presidents of Common Cause and the League of Women Voters to unveil a sweeping reform bill that incorporates many of Smith's ideas, but also includes campaign reforms

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TO REGAIN
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”

important to Democrats.

The lawmakers vowed to pressure their party leaders for quick action. If the measure hasn't made substantial progress in 30 days, the legislators say they will launch a national campaign to force the bill out of committee and directly onto the floor of the House and Senate for a vote.

Good for them.

As written, the legislation under consideration eliminates PAC contributions, caps individual donations, requires candidates to raise 60 percent of their contributions from

within their state and eliminates so-called "soft money" contributions from political parties.

The Clean Congress Act of 1995 ends the practice of laundering money through third parties, requires campaign ads to clearly state who paid for them and allows the Federal Elections Commission to conduct random audits after an election.

The bill calls for voluntary spending limits of \$600,000, and asks candidates not to spend more than \$60,000 of their own money to get elected. Those limits increase if the candidate's opponent refuses to adhere to the voluntary limits.

Candidates who comply with the voluntary limits would be allowed to pay lower rates for television and radio advertisements. They also would be allowed to mail up to three pieces of mail to each voting-age resident in the district at the third-class nonprofit bulk rate.

There are many things to like about the campaign finance reform package, including its bipartisan support inside the legislative chambers and the backing of good-government organizations such as Common Cause and the League of Women Voters.

The trick, of course, is to push the measure through committee and both congressional chambers. That has proved to be an insurmountable task in previous reform attempts.

But the spunk and determination of Smith and her colleagues may be sufficient to push this bill to the president's desk for his signature.

Dare we hope?

NOV 3, 1995

N1670

LUCE PRESS CLIPPINGS

Finance reform bills get another boost

Americans may finally see long overdue action from Congress this session on campaign finance reform.

Connecticut Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, who also serves as general chairman of the Democratic Party, said Wednesday that Democrats in Congress would support nearly identical bipartisan campaign reform proposals introduced in the House and Senate in recent weeks.

A bipartisan spirit and vote will be the only way to get campaign finance reform through Congress, so Dodd's move is significant. Certainly, it will nudge those recalcitrant Democrats and Republicans who oppose reform away from their entrenched positions.

For more than decade, Americans have watched as both parties in Congress — almost as if by unwritten consent — have seemingly taken turns supporting or opposing campaign finance reform but never in unison. So, there has been no significant campaign finance reform.

At the same time, however, an overwhelming majority of Americans have supported cleaning up the campaign finance system and limiting the influence of special interest money in the corridors of Capitol Hill. A recent *USA Today/CNN* poll, for example, found that 83 percent of Americans favor such reforms.

If an overhaul of the system is not accomplished in this reform-minded Congress there will be consequences in the 1996 elections.

The House and Senate bills hold promise for passage because they do not advocate public financing of campaigns. Rather, both will accomplish the following:

- Establish spending limits on House and Senate campaigns.
- Restrict special-interest influence money by limiting political action committee contributions and individual contributions.
- Ban personal use of campaign funds.
- Ban soft money and bundling.

The prohibition of so-called soft money is especially important because national political parties for years have been gathering large sums of money and then rechanneling the funds to state parties to use on federal campaigns.

The practice is legal, but it's ethically reprehensible because it is a way to evade federal laws that regulate the size and sources of political contributions.

Common Cause, Ralph Nader's Public Citizen, the League of Women Voters and Ross Perot have already endorsed the finance reform bills. However, it will take an outpouring of grassroots support to assure this Congress acts and doesn't box these bills into a corner.

Contact your member of Congress and the state's two senators to tell them how important it is that they support this legislation.

MARY McGRORY

Money Talks And Reform Walks

THE McCAIN-Feingold campaign reform bill had a brush with glory last week. For a few heady hours it was in the State of the Union speech by name. But just before show time, the name hit the cutting-room floor. Some issue groups, like Emily's List, having difficulty with this provision or that, protested to the White House, and the president, whose theme was conciliation, obliged them by not mentioning a specific bill, although he endorsed the contents of McCain-Feingold.

There has never been a shortage of politicians who hate campaign reform. "If they had a secret ballot, this would be overwhelmingly defeated," says Sen. Russ Feingold, a liberal Democrat from Wisconsin. He and conservative John McCain of Arizona are the bill's chief sponsors in the Senate.

On the other hand, politicians hate to admit they are against civic virtue. A few notable exceptions don't mind though. Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) is ever on patrol against measures that would reduce the power of money in the political process. House Speaker Newt Gingrich, pressed hard to redeem a New Hampshire promise to the president to do something about

See McGRORY, C5, Col. 4

Mary McGrory is a Washington Post columnist.

MARY McGRORY

Money Talks and Reform Walks

McGRORY, From C1

campaign spending, said at an open hearing that the problem is that there is too little money in politics, not too much.

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole has not tipped his hand yet on McCain-Feingold, but he has always been able to conceal any enthusiasm he might have for campaign finance reform. Last summer, when Feingold (who ran a grass-roots, shoestring campaign against two millionaires to win his seat) rose to request that the Senate put campaign reform on its agenda, Dole hurried from his office to put a stop to the insurgency. But he lost: 13 Republicans voted with Feingold, and the Senate was officially on record as acknowledging that U.S. political activity is drowning in money and becoming a millionaire's game.

Certain glaring examples of what money can buy in politics have helped focus minds on the squalor of it all, such as Michael Huffington's self-financed \$27 million bid for a California Senate seat. Less affluent senators facing re-election spend their lunch hours in offices specially rented so they can telephone strangers and beg for campaign funds. They have to leave their Senate quarters for the operation because it is against the law to raise money on federal property.

Magazine tycoon Steve Forbes, an off-the-wall presidential

candidate, has spent over \$10 million of his own money in an effort to purchase a good showing in the New Hampshire primary. And Enid Waldholtz spent about \$2 million of her own—or maybe it was her father's or her mother-in-law's—money to acquire a House seat in Utah. Both she and Forbes put their money in television ads that their rivals could not match or answer.

The obvious answer, public financing of campaigns, is anathema to Republicans. Year after year, modest attempts to see that candidates get to talk as much as money have gone down to defeat. The Republicans call public financing "welfare for politicians." One reason that unusual hope attends the McCain-Feingold bill is that its sponsors omitted all mention of the unmentionable in their bill.

Participation in their program is entirely voluntary. If candidates don't want to accept the spending limits that the bill would impose (according to the size of their states), they don't have to. But compliance would offer certain benefits. The candidate would get 30 minutes of free television time and for the rest pay reduced rates. People from small states groan at a provision that requires participants to collect 60 percent of their money in their home states; PAC contributions

would be forbidden.

Another reason for hope comes from the fact that it is the first bill that is both bipartisan and bicameral. And the sponsors are highly motivated. John McCain, a decorated Vietnam veteran, whose involvement with the Keating Five enraged him more than spending five and a half years in a Hanoi prison, is determined to clean up campaign politics. Feingold took on the political establishment, scraped together funds from small donors and laughed and needed his way to the Senate, spending only \$2 million, a pittance in these precincts.

The House has fielded a bipartisan team of sponsors, and they all turned out for a recent rally in Concord, Mass., in the district of Rep. Martin Meehan, the progressive Democrat who was the host sponsor. Rep. Christopher Shays, a Republican moderate from Connecticut, and, most intriguingly, Rep. Linda Smith, a hard-right conservative and darling of Christian activists in Washington, were joined by Paul Tsongas of the Concord Coalition and Ross Perot to root for reform. Ann McBride, president of Common Cause, who believes that McCain-Feingold has the best chance of any campaign bill in the last decade, told the 1,000 persons assembled that campaign reform's time has come.

December 7, 1995

Dear Representative:

The new Congress was elected with a mandate to change the way Washington operates. The passage of gift and lobbying reform are important steps in carrying out that mandate. But the American people understand that ending business as usual in the nation's capital will not occur until Congress adopts real and effective campaign finance reform.

We are writing to urge you to cosponsor and work for passage of H.R. 2566, the Bipartisan Clean Congress Act of 1995, introduced by Representatives Linda Smith (R-WA), Christopher Shays (R-CT), Marty Meehan (D-MA) and Ben Cardin (D-MD).

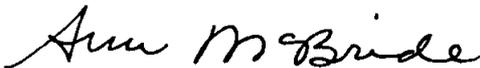
This legislation represents the first bipartisan comprehensive campaign finance reform effort in the House in more than a decade and is a major breakthrough in the fight to clean up the discredited and unfair campaign finance system in Congress.

H.R. 2566 establishes a system for voluntary campaign spending limits, providing discounted broadcast and mailing rates for candidates who agree to limit their spending. In addition, H.R. 2566 places tough new restrictions on political action committees (PACs), large individual contributions and contributions from lobbyists. Further, the legislation will shut down the soft money system, and close other loopholes.

H.R. 2566 is real reform. Its enactment would change the way business is done in Washington and would help to restore the people's faith in their government.

We strongly urge you to cosponsor H.R. 2566.

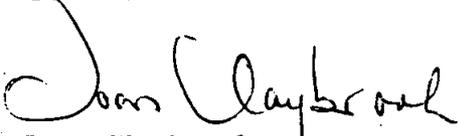
Sincerely,



Ann McBride
Common Cause



Ross Perot
United We Stand America



Joan Claybrook
Public Citizen



Becky Cain
League of Women Voters



Please Join
**Congressman
Marty Meehan**
for a National Town Meeting
on Campaign Finance Reform

with

Former Senator Paul Tsongas, Concord Coalition

Ross Perot, United We Stand



As always, you are invited to share your concerns about any issue

Saturday, January 20, 1996

9:00AM

Mediplex of Concord



See what's being reported...

Directions to Mediplex of Concord (formerly Century Center)

57 Old Road To Nine Acre Corner
Concord, MA

From Route 128: Take Exit 29 West — Route 2 West; continue on Route 2 through 4 traffic lights. At the 5th set of lights (Emerson Hospital will be on your left), take a right and then a sharp right into the parking lot for the Mediplex of Concord.

From Route 495: Take Exit 29 East — Route 2 East; continue on Route 2 through the Concord Rotary, then continue on Route 2 through two traffic lights. At the 3rd set of lights (Emerson Hospital will be on your right), take a left and then a sharp right into the parking lot for the Mediplex of Concord.

Lowell Sun

October 26, 1995

Page 1

Meehan files bill to outlaw PAC money

By CHRISTOPHER SCOTT
Sun Staff

LOWELL — U.S. Rep. Martin Meehan, D-Lowell, yesterday joined two of his Republican colleagues in filing a campaign finance reform bill that would bar congressional candidates from receiving contributions from political action committees (PACs).

Meehan and U.S. Rep. Chris Shays of Connecticut are co-authors of the campaign finance reform bill. Another Republican representative, Linda Smith of Washington, signed on as a co-sponsor.

"Getting an institution like Congress to reform itself is very difficult," Meehan acknowledged today in a telephone interview from Washington, D.C. "But campaign finance reform is key to any reform effort."

The cornerstone of the bill would ban political action committees, or PACs, from contributing to congressional campaigns. But if a ban on PAC money was declared unconstitutional, the Meehan-Shays bill would limit PAC contributions to \$1,000 per election. The current limit is \$5,000.

"PACs contribute millions and millions to congressional campaigns every election," Meehan said. "But if there was no PAC money in congressional campaigns, the result would be a drastic reduction of the cost of running for Congress."

Besides banning PAC money, the Meehan-Shays bill would:

- Reward candidates who agree to a voluntary spending limits of \$600,000 per election, by giving their campaigns reduced postage rates and discounts on advertising.

- Limit large contributions, or those over \$250, to 25 percent of the total amount raised.

- Limit registered lobbyists to contributing only \$100 per election.

- Require that 60 percent of campaign funds raised come from the candidate's home state.

- Place limits on so-called "soft money," funds received by national and state parties.

Meehan said some congressmen have told him that the fact that he does not accept PAC money makes him vulnerable for defeat if he is challenged by a well-financed Republican. Meehan, up for re-election next year, doesn't care, even though Jim Rappaport, the state's Republican Party chairman, is reportedly mulling a run against him. Rappaport, of Concord, spent \$4 million trying to unseat Sen. John Kerry in 1990.

Meehan said House Speaker Newt Gingrich opposes campaign finance reform and would try to scuttle any attempts at reform. Because of that, Meehan and Shays plan to file a discharge petition to force the issue onto the House floor for a vote.

For the discharge petition to be successful, Meehan and Shays need to collect the signatures of 218 other congressmen who support the bill. Once the petition is filed, a vote on the bill must occur within 30 days.

"Conflicts between the House and Senate, and the tendency of incumbents from both parties to watch out for their own re-election prospects have stopped repeated efforts to make changes in the way campaigns are financed," Meehan said. "(Our) legislation represents the first truly bi-partisan campaign finance reform effort in the House in nearly a decade."

Meehan spokesman Will Keyser said the Meehan-Shays bill is similar to legislation introduced recently in the Senate by John McCain, Republican of Arizona and Russ Feingold, Democrat of Wisconsin.

Boston Globe
 September 23, 1995
 Op-ed Page

Lawmakers have shied away from tackling the other transgressions detailed in Packwood's diaries — the corruption of the legislative process by hundreds of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions by lobbyists.

Packwood's other sin

MARTY MEEHAN

There's a dirty little secret buried in the pages of Bob Packwood's infamous diaries that has nothing to do with the sexual exploits of a lecherous legislator. It involves clandestine meetings and whispered promises in exchange for hefty campaign donations — not with women who worked with the senior senator, but with high-powered lobbyists who acquire political influence for the sole purpose of pushing a personal agenda through Congress.

Irate members of Congress have pointed a collective finger, and rightly so, at the dozens of times the senator allegedly trampled on the sexual rights of women — the very group that previously heralded him as its chief champion of the good fight for equality. But these same lawmakers have shied away from tackling the far more pervasive transgressions detailed in Packwood's diaries — the corruption of the legislative process by hundreds of thousands of dollars in directed campaign contributions from lobbyists who often wield more political clout than ranking members of congressional committees. It is no surprise that Congress is eager to close the diaries without exploring their less-titillating confessions, since the institution shares the blame for allowing such widespread abuse of the public trust to occur.

The diaries reveal a "public be damned" approach to governing, resulting in legislation being passed and favors granted to benefit the

senator's political contributors with little consideration given to the interests of the people he was elected to represent. The most blatant example involves lobbyist Ronald Crawford, whose client list includes Shell Oil, the American Iron and Steel Institute, the National Cable Television Association and General Motors, and who just happens to be a close friend and key fund-raiser for Sen. Packwood.

According to the diaries, the senator on several occasions helped Crawford's clients even when he disagreed with the policy changes they were seeking. In the late 1980s, Finance Committee chairman Packwood, normally an oil company foe, included a special provision for Shell Oil in the tax revision bill. The senator's own words condemn him: "The advantage [Crawford] brings to me in the Washington PAC [fundraising] scene is that much of his income is dependent upon his relationship with me."

Packwood's transgressions reflect the common attitude of Washington's legislators to bend the already weak campaign financing restrictions to the breaking point. Ethics Committee staffers charged with the responsibility of determining whether lawmakers can engage in questionable activities explain that they are told "not to tell the senators what they can or cannot do, but to tell them how they can do it." One clear example in the senator's diaries details a 1992 discussion with then Republican Senatorial Committee chairman, Phil Gramm of Texas, about circumventing election laws

governing "soft money" to enable the funneling of \$100,000 from the committee into Packwood's re-election campaign. "What was said in that room would be enough to convict us all of something," Packwood wrote.

Unfortunately, Packwood's compromising relationships with lobbyists are not unusual in Washington. Getting elected to Congress requires a substantial amount of money, and incumbents who curry favor with special-interest groups can easily raise it. Incumbents have outraised challengers more than 2-to-1 in every election in the past 10 years. During the first six months of 1995, Republicans raised a record \$20 million in soft money — an astounding 2-to-1 advantage over Democrats. The impact of these donations can be seen in the radical shift toward tax policies that favor big corporations and wealthy Americans over the traditional middle-class constituencies.

The recent trend in contributions does not shift the blame from Democrats to Republicans, it merely points to the power of the dollar and once again reinforces the need for real reform. Both parties share the responsibility for indecision and inaction.

This year the opportunity to act on campaign finance reform once again exists. President Clinton and House Speaker Newt Gingrich shook hands in New Hampshire to signal their commitment to reach a bipartisan compromise. Sens. John McCain of Arizona, a Republican, and Russ Feingold of Wisconsin, a Democrat, are working together in

the Senate. In the House, I recently joined with Republican Christopher Shays of Connecticut to introduce a bill that would restrict soft-money donations, eliminate PACs and create incentives for candidates to adopt voluntary spending limits. Clamping down on the special-interest gravy train by enacting legislation to cap election spending, curb lobbying and limit PAC contributions is long overdue.

But if history is any indication, major campaign finance reform will become easy prey for the very special interests it is attempting to control. The torpedoing of such legislation isn't even a tough sell for lobbyists because members of Congress, whether Democrat or Republican, are more likely to perpetuate a system that provides them with job security. Although Gingrich has acquiesced to Republican reformers and agreed to pass lobby and gift ban reform bills this year, he has refused to cooperate with either party on passing significant campaign finance reform before the next elections.

Lawmakers need to prove that they take all the allegations in the Packwood diaries seriously — not just the ones that involve sexual exploitation — by overhauling a political system that allows such rampant abuses of power to thrive. Otherwise they could find themselves scorned and rejected by an American public that is fed up with its own exploitation.

Massachusetts Democrat Marty Meehan represents the 5th Congressional District in the House of Representatives.

Washington Post
November 3, 1995
Page A21

Gingrich Calls for More, Not Less, Campaign Cash

By John E. Yang
Washington Post Staff Writer

House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.), in a wide-ranging discussion of the nation's political system, said yesterday that not enough money is being spent on campaigns—a view that runs counter to House Republican freshmen pushing for changes in campaign finance laws.

The speaker's remarks came as he called for a new 16-member commission to study the political system and recommend changes to Congress by May 1.

"We need a very profound overhaul of our political system . . ." he told the House Oversight Committee in a broad, 30-minute statement. "To focus on election campaign reform without taking a political party systemic approach is a profound mistake."

The proposal. Gingrich's response to his June handshake agreement with President Clinton in New Hampshire to explore changing how campaigns are financed, was made against the backdrop of growing pressure on Gingrich from House GOP freshmen. Many of them were elected to change business as usual—to pass legislation that would change campaign finance laws, lobbying regulations and rules governing gifts to lawmakers.

Leaders of the campaign finance overhaul effort blasted the proposal as a delaying tactic. "The old boys and the old establishment came up with the best solution they could—to get on and stall for time," said freshman Rep. Linda A. Smith (R-Wash.), who is sponsoring the House measure with Reps. Christopher Shays (R-Conn.) and Martin T. Meehan (D-Mass.). "That's what we got today."

"We've seen a wonderful example of business as usual," said Becky Cain, president of the League of Women Voters, which is working with the lawmakers.

In addition, many views expressed by the speaker yesterday run counter to the reformers' goals. For instance, the leading bipartisan campaign finance bills in the House and Senate would ban political action committees (PACs), and limit campaign spending.

Gingrich, while saying PACs are "not an appropriate system for the expression of citizen concerns," said he would not ban them. GOPAC, a PAC Gingrich once headed, is now the subject of a Federal Election Commission suit and is part of the House ethics committee investigation of the speaker.

And rather than limit campaign spending, Gingrich said more should be spent. "One of the greatest myths in modern politics is that campaigns are too expensive," he said. "The political process, in fact, is not overfunded, but underfunded."

Gingrich asked Clinton to join him to create a 16-member commission on "Power and Political Reform in the Information Age." Half of its members would be named by Gingrich and Senate Majority Leader Robert J. Dole (R-Kan.) and the others by Clinton, House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt (D-Mo.) and Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle (D-S.D.).

The panel would make recommendations by May 1. Any proposals backed by at least two-thirds of the group's members would go to the House and Senate for approval or disapproval, without the possibility of amendments. Others would be considered in the regular legislative process.

At the White House, press secretary Michael McCurry was noncommittal. "We will look at the speaker's proposal carefully," he told reporters at his daily briefing.

To underscore his contention that campaigns are underfunded, Gingrich cited television network news budgets. "The three networks spend \$1.1 billion on news in one year," he said. "By comparison, the total spent in the 1992 presidential campaign was \$550 million on all sides."

"A multimillionaire broadcaster on the ABC news being given free access to the American people does not represent political power" under current law, he said. "But on the other hand, \$1,000 written by the broadcaster's spouse is political power" as a federally regulated political contribution.

"It is simply a nonsensical socialist analysis based on hatred of the free-enterprise system," he said.

The media's power requires politicians to spend more in campaigns, he said, citing his own experience. "I would guess that over half of the money I raise is spent offsetting the weight of" the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, he said. "It's perfectly natural for newspapers to want campaign spending limits—that means more power for editorial writers, more power for columnists, more power for reporters. But it means less ability for citizens outside that newspaper's bias . . . to answer and respond to that publication."

The speaker closed on a characteristically expansive note, urging committee members and their staffs to study ancient Greece and Rome, pre-Civil War United States and the words of Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson and Henry Cabot Lodge.

"Based on that that reading list," said Oversight Committee Chairman Bill Thomas (R-Calif.), a former community college political science professor. "I expect three units of college credit."

CONCORD TOWN MEETING

Tsongas, Perot urge limits on funds

Politicians urge new rules on campaigns

By David Arnold
GLOBE STAFF

CONCORD — Money didn't talk yesterday, politicians did, as leaders such as Ross Perot and former Sen. Paul Tsongas urged grass-roots support for a bipartisan campaign finance reform law designed to limit money's influence on politics.

"You, the people, own this country, not special interests," Perot told a standing-room-only audience of 10,000 people gathered in the auditorium at Mediplex of Concord.

"The more you know," he added later, "the more difficult it is for money to play with your minds with those 60-second TV ads."

Organized by US Rep. Martin T. Meehan, Democrat of Lowell, this was the first of a half-dozen so-called national town meetings whose aim is to build support for a bill that would, among other things, do away with political action committees.

"Government should be based on the merits of ideas, not where the money's coming from," said Meehan, a co-sponsor of the House version of the bill. US Sen. John F. Kerry co-sponsored the Senate version.

In addition to dispensing with PACs, the legislation includes the following proposals:

- Candidates would be required to raise 60 percent of their contributions in their home states.

- Contributions greater than \$250 could not compose more than 25 percent of total contributions.

- Incentives would be extended to candidates who agree to limit spending in House campaigns to \$600,000, since the US Supreme Court has ruled campaign spending limits are unconstitutional. Limits for Senate campaigns would vary by state; the limit in Massachusetts would be about \$2.8 million.

The incentives would include cheaper costs for broadcast time and postage, both of which must be legislated.

Tsongas and Perot, both former presidential candidates, said campaign finance was central to broader reforms of the political system.

"You will never balance the budget until there's reform in campaign financing," Tsongas said. "The money has created too many obligations



GLOBE STAFF PHOTO / SUZANNE KREITER

Former presidential candidates Ross Perot (left) and Paul Tsongas appear yesterday before a standing-room-only crowd of 10,000 gathered for a "national town meeting" at Mediplex of Concord, N.H.

on both sides."

To illustrate how PACs care more about power than political philosophy, Meehan presented charts — with a tip of the hat to Perot — showing that 70 percent of PAC contributions in the last election went to incumbents.

Other speakers yesterday included Nancy Carapezza, president of the League of Women Voters; Joan Claybrook, president of Public Citizen, and Ann McBride, president of Common Cause.

"We're know people care deeply in Washington, but that the system is rigged," McBride said. "We're angry because we desperately want a country we can be proud of."

Gov. William F. Weld pledged from a seat in the audience that he would abide by the proposed law in his race for Kerry's Senate seat — if Kerry would do the same.

No way, Kerry responded later. "The governor's playing to his own advantage," the senator said, adding that his own fund-raising had already surpassed the proposed \$2.8 million limit, whereas Weld was far from it.

"Laws will need to be passed for the spending limit incentives to become effective," Kerry said.

For the most part, the audience was either very supportive of the legislation or believed it did not go far enough. For critics calling for

more, Claybrook cautioned that one "enemy of good is perfection." She and others warned that almost every elected official has their own campaign finance reform bill, which,

standing alone, have little or no chance of passage.

The bills outline yesterday are the only ones with bipartisan support, she said.

Perot, Tsongas kick off drive for campaign finance reform

By Glen Johnson
ASSOCIATED PRESS

CONCORD — Ross Perot and Paul Tsongas have kicked off a national drive to change the way the country pays for its elections, saying a grassroots effort is needed because the politicians won't do it themselves.

Appearing before 1,000 people in a town that helped launch the American Revolution, Perot said Saturday, "The Minutemen showed us that ordinary Americans are capable of extraordinary things."

The need for a grassroots movement was immediately apparent when two of the participants in the town meeting, Gov. William F. Weld and U.S. Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., refused to agree on a spending limit for their fledgling Senate race.

The audience appeared divided about how which reforms to support.

One man said a better remedy would be to change the federal tax code to a flat tax, arguing that special interest groups make campaign donations in exchange for tax breaks.

Another member of the audience,

Thomas Tierney of Framingham, said a better alternative would be "blind trust financing," in which donations are made anonymously.

Tierney said that would allow elected officials to treat all constituents equally.

Tierney ran as an unenrolled candidate for state treasurer against incumbent Joe Malone in 1994. As a Republican, Tierney ran against and lost to state Sen. David Magnani, D-Framingham, in 1992. He won the GOP nomination for state representative over Barbara Gray in 1990 but lost to her in the general election after she got on the ballot as a Democratic write-in.

Perot, the Texas billionaire and 1992 presidential candidate, said that the current financing system leads to campaigns that are too long and too expensive.

The only way elected officials can survive in that atmosphere is to raise money constantly and accept large donations from special interest groups, he said.

Drive on for campaign \$ reform

Ross Perot and Paul Tsongas kicked off a national drive for campaign-finance reform in Concord yesterday, saying the public had to demand the changes because politicians had a vested interest in the current system.

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us that ordinary Americans are capable of extraordinary things."

The need for a grass-roots movement was immediately apparent when two of the participants in the town meeting, Gov. William F. Weld and Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.), refused to agree on a spending limit for their fledgling Senate race.

The meeting, the first of a se-

ries to be held from coast to coast, was organized by U.S. Rep. Martin T. Meehan (D-Lowell) who helped draft the Clean Congress Act.

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The only way elected officials can survive in that atmosphere is to raise money constantly and accept large donations from special-interest groups, he said.

Tsongas, who also ran for president in 1992, said: "It's obvious that if you pursue your self-interest, PACs are an addiction."

Both men urged audience members to reassert their role in the political process by pressuring Congress to pass the bills.

"You've got something more precious than (the special interests) do. You have your vote," Perot said. □

They came from all walks to talk money

Lowell Sun
1/21/96

Nearly 1,000 pack Concord forum

By MARK ARSENAULT
Sun Staff

CONCORD — The crowd of about 1,000 that sacrificed a sunny Saturday morning to attend U.S. Rep. Martin Meehan's "town meeting" on campaign finance reform was as diverse as the discussion panels Meehan assembled for the event.

"There were Republican zealots here, Democratic zealots, Ross Perot's people," Meehan, D-Lowell, said after the event yesterday. "You couldn't characterize the group at all, except we had a lot of people who care about campaign finance reform."

For the discussion panels, Meehan recruited Democratic and Republican members of Congress, and added third-party founder Perot, the Texas billionaire and 1992 presidential candidate, to show wide support for the Bi-Partisan Clean Congress Act, Meehan's pending campaign finance reform bill.

The crowd at the Mediplex of Concord cheered calls to limit the influence of lobbyists and political action committees. But many there remained skeptical that Congress will pass a bill that makes it easier for challengers to unseat members.

Louise Gaskins of Groton said yesterday's conference was a good starting point, but thinks campaign finance reform may be years away.

"This is going to be a tough row to hoe," she said. "But I have hope. If they can get the first step through and pass these bills, then maybe we can get real reform."

Gene Roberts of Wayland, a Perot supporter, left the conference optimistic that Congress will pass a campaign reform bill.

"This was dynamite," Roberts said. "I'm going to go home and write a letter to Sen. (Edward) Ken-



PAC BACKER: Joe Osbaldeston of Ayer, a member of the National Life Underwriters Association, defends the use of political action committee money in campaigns.

nedy and tell him that he should support this."

Meehan organized the event with former Massachusetts Sen. Paul Tsongas, Rep. Linda Smith, R-Wash., and Rep. Chris Shays, R-Conn., to push for his bill. Gov. William F. Weld showed up, speaking from the audience.

Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., who also attended the event, is co-sponsoring the Senate's version of the bill. The bills are designed to limit the influence of political action committees and give challengers a chance against incumbents, Meehan said.

Please see CROWD/6

CROWD/From Page 1

Yesterday's conference was both a pep rally for the reform bills and a chance for voters to question Perot and members of Congress who support the bills.

The conference drew a varied cross-section of voters interested in election reform.

Some wore charcoal-gray suits, with solid ties and shiny leather loafers; others sported cowboy boots and checkered flannel shirts tucked into jeans. A few early birds passed the time before the event with *The New York Times* business page, while others sat together and bemoaned the Celtics' loss Friday night.

Once audience members started asking questions, their political differences became obvious as well. But nearly everyone agreed: They want to change the way political campaigns are run.

One man said a better remedy than Meehan's bill would be to change the federal tax code to a

flat tax, arguing that special interest groups make campaign donations in exchange for tax breaks.

"You're treating the symptoms, not the disease," he said. "What you propose here would ultimately be corrupted the way PACs have been corrupted."

Another member of the audience, Thomas Tierney of Framingham, said a better alternative would be "blind trust financing," in which donations are made anonymously. Tierney said that would allow elected officials to treat all constituents equally.

But some voters weren't impressed with what happened at the event.

"Campaign reform is a good idea, but one thing that bothers me is there's just too many politicians yakking, and not enough listening to people trying to speak," said Walter Nicholson of Burlington.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, 1996



Summary of H.R. 2566, the campaign-finance reform bill sponsored by U.S. Rep. Martin Meehan:

- Eliminates political action committee (PAC) contributions in federal elections. The bill says that if a ban is ruled unconstitutional after passage, PACs would be limited to \$1,000 per candidate per election, the same as individuals. PACs now may donate \$5,000. No candidate could receive more than 25 percent of total spent on a campaign from PACs.
- Sets voluntary spending limits of \$600,000 in House races. Establishes discounts on TV and radio advertising and postage for candidates who agree to the limit. Those candidates must also agree to limit their personal donations to their own campaigns, large contributions, and donations from contributors outside their districts. Limits would be eased if a candidate's opponent is not observing the limits.
- Requires candidates to raise 60 percent of contributions from within their home state.
- Caps individual contributions exceeding \$250 to an aggregate limit of no more than 25 percent of the amount spent on a campaign.
- Registered lobbyists could give no donation exceeding \$100.
- Bans taxpayer-financed mass mailings from Congress members in election years.
- Eliminates "soft money" (special-interest donations funneled through political parties, which are uncapped) in federal elections and ends the practice of "bundling," by which many employees in the same corporation donate to the same candidate, skirting existing campaign finance law.
- Tightens reporting requirements on spending for or against candidates by single-issue and special-interest groups.

Kerry, Weld rally for reform, then retreat

Meehan, Tsongas
and Perot attack
campaign spending

By CRAIG SANDLER
Sun Staff

CONCORD — Sen. John Kerry and Gov. William Weld endorsed strong new rules for political finance — but then declined to abide by them — at a “national town meeting” on campaign finance reform held here yesterday.

They joined a crowd of almost 1,000 that cheered Ross Perot, Paul Tsongas and a bill written by Lowell’s congressman, U.S. Rep. Martin Meehan. The bill is designed to put limits on spending in federal elections and on the role of special interests.

But even as the crowd at the Mediplex of Concord called for politicians to change their ways, Weld and Kerry said their opposing Senate campaigns can’t afford to make the needed changes voluntarily.

Republican Weld rose from his seat in the audience to endorse Meehan’s reform bill



A CHALLENGE: Gov. William Weld, at a campaign finance reform rally in Concord, pledged to limit his Senate campaign spending if Sen. John Kerry would. SUN/JULIA MALAKIE

— the Bipartisan Clean Congress Act. Then Weld pledged to observe its key provisions whether or not the legislation passes this year, if Democrat Kerry would do the same.

Kerry, who spoke at the event also about the need to pass Meehan’s bill, said he would not accept the governor’s challenge to observe its limits.

That left the combatants in

Massachusetts’ highest visibility political race embracing evils they decried at yesterday’s forum: million-dollar election campaigns and the political action committee money that pays for them.

Weld will accept PAC money this election year. Kerry won’t.

But Kerry told reporters af-

Please see **REFORM/4**

■ Incentives would be extended to candidates who agree to limit spending in House campaigns to \$600,000, since the US Supreme Court has ruled campaign spending limits are unconstitutional. Limits for Senate campaigns would vary by state; the limit in Massachusetts would be about \$2.8 million.

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"We're know people care deeply in Washington, but that the system is rigged," McBride said. "We're angry because we desperately want a country we can be proud of."

Gov. William F. Weld pledged from a seat in the audience that he would abide by the proposed law in his race for Kerry's Senate seat - if Kerry would do the same.

No way, Kerry responded later.

"The governor's playing to his own advantage," the senator said, adding that his own fund-raising had already surpassed the proposed \$2.8 million limit, whereas Weld was far from it.

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more, Claybrook cautioned that one "enemy of good is perfection." She and others warned that almost every elected official has their own campaign finance reform bill, which,

standing alone, have little or no chance of passage.

The bills outline yesterday are the only ones with bipartisan support, she said.

Weld to join Meehan, Perot at 'town meeting'

Concord event scheduled for tomorrow

By CRAIG SANDLER
Sun Staff

Gov. William Weld has decided to attend the "national town meeting" on campaign-finance reform scheduled for tomorrow in Concord.

The event brings together politicians who ostensibly have the same goal — cleaning up the nation's system of funding political campaigns — but different agendas:

- For Weld and Sen. John Kerry, who are fighting for the Senate seat Kerry has held since 1984, the event is an opportunity to contrast their approaches to campaign reform. The exercise has the potential to become prickly.

- Kerry spokesman Jennifer Watson yesterday noted that Weld has decided to accept political action committee money during the Senate race, citing

Kerry's access to his wife's nearly \$600 million fortune. "In 1993 Bill Weld was quoted saying PACs just try to corrupt and undermine the system. We certainly will be looking forward to seeing what he has to say about it," Watson said.

Weld spokesman Pamela Jonah said the governor is likely to make a brief statement during opening remarks, then join the audience.

- For Ross Perot, who still has not ruled out a run for president as the nominee of the Reform Party — the third party he established — tomorrow will be a chance to advance both his party and himself.

Perot was due to arrive in Concord tonight and will be among those delivering opening remarks when the forum begins at 9 a.m. Former Sen. Paul Tsongas will also speak, as he pushes one of the key planks of

the Concord Coalition, the reform group he and former Sen. Warren Rudman founded after they left the Senate.

- U.S. Rep. Martin Meehan will burnish his image as a reformer in hopes of staving off challenges for his seat in the House. Meehan has been trying to pass campaign finance reform since 1992, and has now been rebuffed by both a Democratic speaker of the House and a Republican one. Meehan will be joined by Republican Reps.

Linda Smith, R-Wash., and Chris Shays, R-Conn., who helped write the bill he will tout tomorrow, which seeks to eliminate PAC funding of campaigns and set new limits on spending.

- Good-government groups Public Citizen, Common Cause and the League of Women Voters all will be trying to build grass-roots support for new laws to limit the influence of corporate and special-interest money in Washington.

IF YOU GO...

The public is welcome at Saturday's national town meeting on campaign finance reform, scheduled to start at 9 a.m.

Directions to Mediplax of Concord:
FROM RTE. 128: Take exit 29 West-Rte. 2 West; continue on Rte. 2 through four traffic lights. At the fifth set of lights (Emerson Hospital on left), take a right and then a sharp right into the parking lot for the Mediplax of Concord.

FROM RTE. 495: Take exit 29 East-Rte. 2 East; continue on Rte. 2 through the Concord Rotary, then continue on Rte. 2 through two traffic lights. At the third set of lights (Emerson Hospital on right), take a left and then a sharp right into the parking lot for the Mediplax of Concord.

The event will not be broadcast live, but will be taped by Continental Cablevision for airing at a later date.

Perot to appear at 'Clean Congress' session

By Jeremy Wallace
States News Service

WASHINGTON — Hoping to attract national attention to his push for campaign finance reform, Rep. Martin T. Meehan, D-Lowell, has assembled an unlikely cast for a town meeting in Concord this weekend.

H. Ross Perot, former senator Paul Tsongas and two respected Republicans in the House of Representatives have confirmed they will appear at the 9 a.m. town meeting at the Concord Mediplex.

They have joined citizen groups such as Common Cause, Public Citizen and the League of Women Voters in publicly supporting Meehan's proposed Clean Congress Act, introduced in October.

"Real campaign finance reform will not happen unless leaders outside Washington help apply pressure on members of Congress," Meehan said.

Meehan's bill, co-sponsored by Reps. Christopher H. Shays, R-

Conn., and Linda A. Smith, R-Wash., would eliminate campaign contributions from political action committees and set voluntary spending limits on the amount of money House candidates can spend on an election.

In exchange for agreeing not to spend more than \$600,000, candidates would in turn receive discounts for advertising on television and radio.

The Concord rally will kick off two months of similar public forums in other parts of the country to gain support for the Meehan proposal.

Temporary truce may crack at reform meeting

The Lawrence Eagle Tribune
1/19/96

By John Gill
Eagle-Tribune Writer

As U.S. Sen. John F. Kerry, D-Mass., and Republican challenger Gov. William F. Weld collect millions of dollars for their high-profile campaign, both have tried to score points over how the other is raising political money.

The two candidates' campaigns promise to tone down the skirmishing tomorrow morning when they appear at 5th District Congressman Martin T. Meehan's "national town meeting" in Concord on campaign finance reform.

The bipartisan event will feature speeches by a pair of 1992 presidential candidates who



Martin T. Meehan

Please see RACE, Page 12

Continued from Page 11

have been pushing to curb the influence of "special interest" money in national politics: Texas billionaire H. Ross Perot and former U.S. Sen. Paul E. Tsongas, D-Lowell.

Congressman Meehan, D-Lowell, is using the event to kick off a national grassroots campaign to force Congress to pass his Bipartisan Clean Congress Act.

The bill attempts to regulate elections by limiting spending, eliminating political action committee (PAC) money and making it cheaper for candidates who abide by these rules to air TV ads — generally a campaign's biggest expense.

Congressman Meehan said he wants to avoid turning the event into a sideshow for the Massachusetts Senate race. But that may be hard to

avoid.

Sen. Kerry, a co-sponsor of a similar measure in the Senate, will take part in a panel discussion "Strategies for Change in Congress" with congressional Republicans Christopher Shays of Connecticut and Linda Smith of Washington, who have joined Congressman Meehan on this bill.

Gov. Weld, who signed the 1994 Massachusetts campaign finance reform law imposing stricter limits and greater disclosure on contributions, will not have an official role in the event.

But Congressman Meehan invited him, and will introduce the Republican to ask the first question for Sen. Kerry's panel discussion.

Will this turn into a campaign confrontation? Both sides say no.

But aside from Gov. Weld's

embrace of House Speaker Newt Gingrich and Sen. Kerry's aversion to mandatory minimum prison sentences, the two rivals have spent the past two months sniping mainly about campaign money. Highlights include:

Pickle fortune: Sen. Kerry saying he would not to use wife Teresa Heinz's \$760 million pickle and ketchup fortune to help bankroll his reelection, then backtracking from a firm pledge.

\$5 million limit: Gov. Weld calling a \$5 million spending limit after he announced he would run for U.S. Senate and Sen. Kerry rejecting any limit unless the governor agreed to refrain from "negative campaigning."

Weld's PAC money: Gov. Weld abandoning his previous refusal and announcing he would accept PAC

contributions, except from the tobacco and gun lobby, saying he needs to catch up with Sen. Kerry's \$3 million campaign war chest. The Democrat does not take PAC money.

Congressman Meehan said he chose historic Concord to begin a "modern-day revolution." He blames special interests that finance both parties for the budget deficit, increasing health costs and other political problems facing the nation.

The public is invited to tomorrow's event, beginning at 9 a.m. at Mediplex of Concord. Sponsors expect 500 or more people to attend.

To get there, take Interstate 495 to Route 2 East, follow through the Concord Rotary, go left at the third set of lights (Emerson Hospital) and take a sharp right into the parking lot.

Campaign reform's 'Joan of Arc' takes center stage

CONCORD — Maybe a thousand people came here Saturday to hear Marty Meehan talk about campaign finance reform.

Then again, maybe they came to see the odd political all-star team the Lowell congressman had put together for his "National Town Meeting" on campaign finance reform.

There on the stage of the Mediplex auditorium was Ross Perot — self-made billionaire, self-destroyed presidential candidate. Perot did not disappoint. He evoked vivid memories of 1992, twanging out his two favorite words — "Thyat's rawng!" — and comparing the country to a car.

Next to Perot sat Paul Tsongas, who has re-emerged on the national consciousness by jetting around the country and stirring up third-party rumors.

There were Gov. Bill Weld and Sen. John



**STEVE
KLOEHN**

Kerry, the bickering Brahmins, willing to turn any gathering of two or more into a campaign event.

There were staunch Democrats, staunch Republicans and many — like Meehan — who belong to a party almost in spite of themselves.

But the most compelling speaker at the meeting — and the spark plug in what may yet become a national movement for campaign finance reform — was Linda Smith, a first-term Congresswoman from the other end of the country.

Last year Smith, a Republican, was the first write-in candidate ever to win a congressional race in the state of Washington. She announced her candidacy two weeks before her primary, gathered 35,000 signatures, then trounced an incumbent Democrat in the general election.

She is brash, uncompromising, populist and conservative — everything Newt Gingrich could have wanted for his freshman class.

She is also a squirming thorn in Gingrich's side.

Gingrich made Smith a subcommittee chair-

man in her first term. In return, Smith whipped up Republican opposition to several Gingrich budget proposals, on the grounds he has wavered from the Contract With America.

Last June Gingrich traveled to New Hampshire to look for mouse and debate President Clinton. The two made headlines by shaking hands on a promise to enact campaign reform.

Smith, who does not accept money from political action committees, has since made it her duty to remind Gingrich of his campaign-reform pledge at every chance she gets.

She was a latecomer to the Clean Congress Act, the centerpiece of Meehan's crusade. But even Rep. Christopher Shays, the Connecticut Republican who has been pushing campaign finance reform as long as anybody in Congress, calls Smith "a first among equals" in the current campaign.

As compliments go, that's nothing. Perot — not a man known for sharing the spotlight — used his parting remarks on Saturday not to tout his fledgling political party, or even campaign finance reform, but to praise Linda

Smith. "Joan of Arc," he called her.

It was Smith who convinced Perot to endorse the Clean Congress Act the day it was introduced. And though she has made as many enemies as friends, it is Smith who gives the bill some chance for success in the new Republican Congress.

Shays said Saturday that of all the campaign finance reform efforts that have come and gone in recent years, this one alone seems to have the momentum to force change.

Meehan says that the Clean Congress Act is, far and away, his top priority in Congress. He doesn't put it quite this way, but the bill is Meehan's last, best chance to make a name for himself in Washington before his self-imposed term limit in the year 2000.

And though Meehan has always been right on the issue, he may soon discover that it is more important to get on stage with the right people. Linda Smith is one of them.

Steve Kloehn's column appears on Monday, Wednesday and Friday in The Sun.