

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 236

To express the sense of the House of Representatives on consideration of comprehensive campaign finance reform.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 18, 1997

Ms. KAPTUR (for herself, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. MILLER of California, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. FARR of California, Mrs. MINK of Hawaii, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Mrs. MALONEY of New York) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on House Oversight

RESOLUTION

To express the sense of the House of Representatives on consideration of comprehensive campaign finance reform.

Whereas spending on Federal election campaigns has increased to an estimated \$2,650,000,000 in the most recent election cycle, a threefold increase over campaign spending just 20 years ago, even after adjusting for inflation;

Whereas, in the 1995–1996 election cycle, the Democratic Party committees raised \$332,000,000, a 73 percent increase over the \$192,000,000 raised 4 years earlier, and the Republican Party committees raised \$549,000,000, a 74 percent increase over the \$316,000,000 raised 4 years earlier;

Whereas overall campaign spending for congressional races has risen from \$99,000,000 in 1976 to \$626,000,000 in 1996, a more than sixfold increase;

Whereas since 1992, when political parties were first required to report soft money contributions to the Federal Election Commission, these contributions, which are raised outside Federal election law, have tripled, from \$86,000,000 in 1992 to over \$263,000,000 in the last election cycle;

Whereas there has been a proliferation of negative “issue” ads paid for by political parties and interest groups to influence Federal elections, further increasing the cost of campaigns;

Whereas as political campaigns have become longer, costlier, and more negative, voter apathy has increased and voter participation in Presidential elections has declined from 60 percent in 1948–1968, to 53 percent from 1972 to 1992, to an all-time low of 49 percent in 1996;

Whereas these trends will continue if Congress fails to enact comprehensive campaign finance reform;

Whereas President Clinton and Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, on June 11, 1995, in Claremont, New Hampshire, expressed their support for the creation of an independent commission to write binding campaign finance reform legislation, but no commission was ever established; and

Whereas President Clinton, during his State of the Union address on February 4, 1997, implored Congress to act on campaign finance reform and pass legislation by July 4, 1997, the 221st anniversary of the birth of our democ-

racy, but Congress failed to meet his goal: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that the House of Representatives should pro-
3 ceed to the consideration of comprehensive campaign fi-
4 nance reform that reduces spending on political campaigns
5 and curtails the influence of special interest money in Fed-
6 eral elections by no later than October 9, 1997, and adopt
7 as a goal the final enactment of such legislation by no
8 later than October 31, 1997.

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