



Dale Lipschultz <dlipschu@ala.org> on 04/09/2004 03:36:58 PM

To: politicalcommitteestatus@fec.gov
cc:

Subject: National Coalition for Literacy Response

Please see attached letter.

Dale Lipschultz
President, National Coalition for Literacy

Dale Lipschultz
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Build Literacy @ Your Library
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. NCL Response to FEC Proposal 4-9-04.doc

The National Coalition for Literacy

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Chicago, IL 60611
Email ncl@national-coalition-literacy.org

www.national-coalition-literacy.org

Ms. Mai T. Dinh
Acting Assistant General Counsel
Federal Election Commission
999 E Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20463

Dear Ms. Dinh:

The National Coalition for Literacy is a membership organization of entities involved in the provision of literacy services to undereducated adults and to adults whose native language is other than English. The Coalition promotes research and development efforts and increased public awareness, and fosters collaboration at the national level of public and private organizations that support adult literacy and English language development.

Adult literacy and language development play an important role in a number of Federal legislative initiatives such as Head Start, Even Start, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, but receive their major impetus from Title II of the Workforce Investment Act – The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. (AEFLA). The Congress, in establishing an appropriation level for this Act, has for several years set aside approximately \$70 million for an integrated English as a Second Language/Civics program. Agencies receiving a grant or contract from this set-aside are required to teach about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. In so doing these agencies employ a nonpartisan approach but certainly urge registering and voting for those who are eligible to do so. They also may lay out key issues for adult learners to consider in making up their own minds. They sometimes invite visits by legislators to present their points of view. Federal legislators on both sides of the aisle have praised these programs because they bring an appreciation of what legislators do and the amount of work that often goes into lawmaking.

We are genuinely concerned about the proposed rules amending the definition of a “political committee” and defining even nonpartisan civics instruction as “political.” We fear that in complying with what is now part of the law of the land many of our members may be placed in jeopardy of running afoul of the regulations of the Commission. We urge that any new rulemaking respect the responsibility of adult educators to continue to instruct new Americans in the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

Please contact me for additional information at:

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Sincerely,



Dale Lipschultz, Ph.D.
President, National Coalition for Literacy