

NEWS FROM...

# FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION



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## FEC CONTINUES TO PREPARE FOR 1980 ELECTIONS WITH NEW DEBATE REGULATIONS

WASHINGTON - July 13, 1979 - Certain tax-exempt organizations, such as the League of Women Voters, may accept corporate and union money to sponsor non-partisan public candidate debates for the 1980 elections according to proposed regulations recently adopted by the Federal Election Commission.

The FEC has established this area of permissible donations as one exception to the general prohibition on corporate and union involvement in federal election campaigns on the rationale that candidate debates are in the public interest. Also, funds donated by such entities would be to educate and inform voters and to stimulate voter participation rather than to promote any one candidate's election or defeat.

The proposed regulations have been sent to Congress and, if not disapproved within 30 legislative days, will become effective.

The passage of regulations affecting the sponsorship and funding of 1980 election debates is part of a series of actions initiated by the FEC in its continuing effort to prepare for the 1980 election cycle.

Already in place are regulations governing the conduct of presidential campaigns which opt to receive federal matching money. Still in the works are regulations concerning national nominating conventions, general election campaigns accepting federal funding, and complete systems manuals for all federally funded campaigns.

The FEC's new rules on candidate debates recognize the educational purpose of this type of nonpartisan election activity as providing a public forum for federal candidates to communicate their views to the public.

Sponsorship of debates will be limited to certain tax-exempt organizations with a history of nonpartisan activity. In addition, the new regulations base the structure of the debates on party affiliation and allow the sponsor the discretion to include all significant candidates regardless of whether they represent major, minor, or new political parties or are independent or write-in candidates.