

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION



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FEC SEEKS SENATE RULES COMMITTEE OK OF BARE-BONED AUTHORIZATION FOR FY '90

WASHINGTON - A Fiscal Year 1990 budget representing a two percent increase over fiscal year 1989, was presented today by the Federal Election Commission. Even with the increase, the Agency would lose 6 staff positions.

In testimony before the Senate Rules Committee, FEC Finance Committee Chairman Lee Ann Elliott said that some \$246,000 represents unfunded, Congressionally-mandated expenditures for an Inspector General's office and increased health insurance premiums. "We can no longer absorb these increases without cutting programs," she said.

Joining her in presenting the FEC testimony were Chairman Danny Lee McDonald and Commissioner John Warren McGarry, who is a member of the Finance Committee.

The Commission's base budget of \$15,330,000 presented today includes cutting 13 temporary staff, and is \$103,000 under the 1989 fiscal year appropriation. The base cannot absorb one more cut, nor sustain additional mandated programs," Commissioner Elliott stated.

In addition, the FEC has proposed five programs that would bring its budget to \$15,768,000 with a total reduction of six staff positions.

The five program additions would: 1) restore full data entry for all contributions over \$200; 2) provide on-site legal training for the Office of General Counsel; 3) add three support staff to the Office of General Counsel; 4) increase the Press Office's ability to respond to increasing press interest; and 5) in conjunction with the Advertising Council, provide a public education program on the Presidential Election Fund tax check-off.

"These programs reflect the Commission's experience in increasing the speed and clarity of disclosure and enforcement, and the promotion of a better understanding of campaign finance. Our judgement is confirmed by the fact that these programs have also been urged upon us by the Congress, the press and the public," Commissioner Elliott said.

In closing her testimony, she said, "Our 1989 appropriation left us in a fiscal straight jacket. We must have our budget request or take immediate steps to cut back our services and programs."

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