

# FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION



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## PETITIONS FOR RULEMAKING ON 'SOFT MONEY' AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC VIEWING, COMMENT

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Election Commission on June 12 approved for publication in the Federal Register a notice of availability of two separate petitions seeking a rulemaking to ban or impose greater restrictions on "soft money" -- funds raised and spent outside the restrictions of the Federal Election Campaign Act.

Under present regulations, such funds may be used to support non-federal candidates and pay for a portion of activities or advertisements not directly benefitting federal candidates.

The *pro forma* action taken by the Commission in its regular public meeting June 12 was the initial legal step the agency takes after receiving any petition for rulemaking. One of the petitions seeking the FEC to address the soft money issue was filed by President Clinton and the other by a bipartisan delegation of five Members of Congress. The petitions are available for public inspection and a 30-day comment period. They may be viewed at the Commission's Public Records Office, 999 E Street, NW, or obtained through the Commission's "Faxline" service by dialing 202-501-3413 (ask for document #230). The petitions can also be found on the Commission's Internet website at <http://www.fec.gov>.

Comments on the petitions for rulemaking should be addressed to Susan Propper, Assistant General Counsel, Federal Election Commission, 999 E Street, NW, Washington, DC, 20463. Faxed comments should be sent to (202) 219-3923. Comments may also be sent on Internet e-mail, addressed to [softmoney@fec.gov](mailto:softmoney@fec.gov). Internet commenters should include their name, postal mailing address and e-mail address.

If a rulemaking proceeding is initiated after completion of the preliminary process begun on June 12, it must follow an established procedure affording ample public notice and comment, as set out in the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. §553). That procedure includes publication of any proposed new rules in the Federal Register, opportunity for substantive written comments by interested parties, the possibility of an oral hearing, and, ultimately, publication of final rules. In addition, the Federal Election Campaign Act mandates any new final rules be transmitted to Congress at least 30 legislative days prior to implementation.

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