

## Money and Politics Consensus Report

The first set of questions deals with democratic values and interests with respect to financing political campaigns.

1. **What should be the goals and purposes of campaign finance regulation?**
  - a. Seek political equality for all citizens. Agree. Comment: Too broad a statement to be meaningful.
  - b. Protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns. Agree. Comment: would like the wording changed to "to protect representative democracy from disproportionate financing by one source, distorting the political scene."
  - c. Enable candidates to compete equitably for public office. Agree.
  - d. Ensure that candidates have sufficient funds to communicate their messages to the public. No Consensus
  - e. Ensure that economic and corporate interests are part of the election dialogue. Disagree.
  - f. Provide voters sufficient information about candidates and campaign issues to make informed choices. No Consensus. Comment: Information is important, but is this an area that relates to campaign finance regulation?
  - g. Ensure the public's right to know who is using money to influence elections. Agree.
  - h. Combat corruption and undue influence in government. Agree.
2. **Evaluate whether the following activities are types of political corruption.**
  - a. A candidate or officeholder agrees to vote or work in favor of a donor's interest in exchange for a campaign contribution. Agree.
  - b. An officeholder or her/his staff gives greater access to donors. No Consensus.
  - c. An officeholder votes or works to support policies that reflect the preferences of individuals and organizations in order to attract contributions from them. Disagree.
  - d. An officeholder seeks political contributions implying that there will be retribution unless a donation is given. Agree.
  - e. The results of the political process consistently favor the interests of significant campaign contributors. Agree. Comment: Would like the word consistently replaced with "unduly."

The second set of questions deals with First Amendment protections for speakers and activities in political campaigns.

1. **Many different individuals and organizations use a variety of methods to communicate their views to voters in candidate elections. Should spending to influence an election by any of the following be limited?**
  - a. Individual citizens, including wealthy individuals. Some spending limits.

- b. Political Action Committees, sponsored by an organization, whose campaign spending comes from contributions by individuals associated with the sponsoring organization, such as employees, stockholders, members, and volunteers. Banned
- c. For profit organizations from their corporate treasury funds. Banned.
- d. Trade associations from the association's general treasury funds. Banned.
- e. Labor unions from the union's general treasury fund. Banned.
- f. Non-profit organizations from the organization's general treasury fund. No Consensus.
- g. Non-partisan organizations and "get out the vote" groups. No limitation
- h. Political parties. Some Limits
- i. Candidates for public office spending money the candidate has raised from contributors. Some Limits.
- j. Candidates for public office spending their own money. Some limits.

2. **The press plays a major role in candidate elections through editorial endorsements, news coverage, and other communications directly to the public that are often important to the outcome. Should such spending to influence an election by newspapers, Television and other electronic media or internet communications be limited?**

We could not reach consensus on any of their three categories. We were actually a little puzzled by the meaning of this question.

The last set of questions concerned what methods of regulation the League would support and how those regulations should be administered and enforced.

1. **Should the LWV support the following?**

- a. Abolishing SuperPACs and spending directed or coordinated by candidates other than a candidate's own single campaign committee. Agree.
- b. Restrictions on direct donations and bundling by lobbyists. Agreed.
- c. Public funding for candidates. This included three different scenarios. We could not reach consensus on the first two. We wondered whether this funding would be for winners of primaries or anyone who wanted to run. The third one asked if we would support public financing without spending limits, and we disagreed on that one.

2. **How should the regulations be administered and enforced?**

- a. By an even numbered commission with equal representation by the two major political parties. Disagree.
- b. By an odd numbered commission with at least one independent or non-partisan commissioner. Agree.
- c. By structural and budgetary changes to the Federal Elections Commission. Agree
- d. No Consensus. Disagree.