

TITLE XVI—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**SEC. 1601. REIMBURSEMENT OF RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND MAINTENANCE COSTS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later August 1, 2001, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation shall promulgate final regulations to carry out section 522(b) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 522(b)), without regard to—

(1) the notice and comment provisions of section 553 of title 5, United States Code;

(2) the Statement of Policy of the Secretary of Agriculture effective July 24, 1971 (36 Fed. Reg. 13804), relating to notices of proposed rulemaking and public participation in rulemaking; and

(3) chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the "Paperwork Reduction Act").

(b) CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF AGENCY RULEMAKING.—In carrying out this section, the Corporation shall use the authority provided under section 808 of title 5, United States Code.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The final regulations promulgated under subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of publication of the final regulations.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 2001

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until the hour of 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, March 20. I further ask unanimous consent that on Tuesday, immediately following the prayer, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate then resume consideration of S. 27, the campaign finance reform bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I further ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess from the hours of 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. for the weekly policy conferences to meet.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, the Senate will begin consideration of another amendment to the campaign finance reform bill beginning at 9:30 a.m. tomorrow. A vote is expected to occur at approximately noon, prior to adjourning for the weekly party conferences. When the Senate reconvenes at 2:15, further amendments will be offered. By a previous agreement, there will be up to 3 hours of debate prior to a vote in relation to amendments. Therefore, Senators may expect votes approximately every 3 hours throughout the day.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I now ask unanimous consent that

the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order following the remarks of Senator LIEBERMAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I thank the Chair. I thank the Senator from Kentucky.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise to speak about S. 27, the so-called McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform proposal, of which I am honored to be a cosponsor.

In taking up this proposal today, the Senate is embarking on a historic journey. Over the next couple of weeks, we will have an opportunity to do something that is really quite rare around here; that is, to debate, consider, and ultimately vote on the essential nature of our political system. That vote I believe will have a significant effect on the vitality and, indeed, on the viability long term of our Democrat democracy.

No less than our forefathers who drafted the Constitution, we will be asked in the days ahead to take a stand on how we believe our Government should work and to whom its leaders should be held accountable.

These are the questions we will be considering and debating in this proposal:

Do we want a government in which power comes from the people, and those who are privileged to exercise that power are ultimately accountable to the people?

Will we uphold the ideal of our democracy so that the passion and force with which people articulate their views and the votes that they cast on election day are the means through which they influence our Government's direction, or do we want a system where the size of a person's wallet or the depth of an interest group's bank account count more than a person's views or votes?

I do not believe that anyone in this body would embrace the latter vision of our Republic. But that is precisely, I believe, where our Government is headed if we do not enact the bill we are debating today. For too many years, we have allowed money and the never ending chase for it to undermine our political system, to breed cynicism among our citizens, and to compromise the essential principle of our democracy. For, after all, America is supposed to be a country where every citizen has an equal say in the Government's decisions, and every citizen has an equal ability, in the words of the Constitution, to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

As that great observer of America's Democratic genius Alexis de Tocqueville put it when he analyzed our Nation's political system during the 19th century:

The people reign in the American political world as the Deity does in the universe. They

are the cause and the aim of all things; everything comes from them, and everything is absorbed in them.

How far we have come. I question whether any current observer of American politics could repeat de Tocqueville's statement with a straight face.

Look at what has become of our system. Virtually every day in this city an event is held where the price of admission far exceeds what the overwhelming majority of Americans can ever dream of giving to a candidate or a political party. For \$1-, \$5-, \$10-, \$50- or \$100,000, wealthy individuals or interest groups can buy the time of candidates and elected officials, gaining access and thereby influence that is far beyond the grasp of those who have only their voice and their votes to offer.

Our national political parties publicly tout the access and influence big donor donations can buy. One even advertises on its web site that a \$100,000 donation will bring meetings and contacts with Congressional leadership throughout the year, and tells us it is "designed specifically for the Washington-based corporate or PAC representative" a donor group whose entry price is \$15,000.

For that amount, the party's web site tells us, donors get into a club whose agenda "is simple—bringing the best of our party's supporters together with our congressional leadership for a continuing, collegial dialogue on current policy issues."

Needless to say, the political parties selling these tickets to access and influence have found buyers aplenty. In 1997, I spent the better part of a year participating in the Governmental Affairs Committee's investigation into campaign finance abuses during the 1996 campaign. Our attention was riveted by marginal hustlers such as Johnny Chung who compared the White House to a subway, saying, "You have to put in coins to open the gates," and Roger Tamraz, who told us that he did not even bother to register to vote because he knew that his donations would get him so much more.

Appalling as these stories were, they, in the end, obscured a far greater scandal; that is, the far more prevalent collection of big soft dollar donations comes not from opportunistic hangers on but from mainstream corporations, unions and individuals.

Staggering amounts have gone to both political parties. During the election cycle that just ended, the parties collectively raised \$1.2 billion, almost double the amount raised in 1998, and 37 percent more than in the last Presidential cycle.

The bulk of those increases came in the form of soft money—the unlimited large dollar donations from individuals and interest groups. Republicans raised \$244.4 million in soft money while Democrats raised \$243 million. For Republicans, it was a 73-percent increase over the last cycle, and for Democrats