

**Campaign Legal Center • Common Cause • Democracy 21
League of Women Voters • Public Citizen • U.S. PIRG**

October 1, 2007

The Honorable Harry Reid
Senate Majority Leader
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senate Majority Leader Reid,

Our groups strongly urge you to take the steps necessary to ensure that separate votes are held in the Senate on the nominations of Robert Lenhard, David Mason, Hans von Spakovsky and Steven Walther to serve as Commissioners on the Federal Election Commission.

The organizations include the Campaign Legal Center, Common Cause, Democracy 21, the League of Women Voters, Public Citizen and U.S. PIRG.

The FEC is an ineffective enforcement agency that lacks public credibility. Citizens are entitled to know where their Senators stand on the confirmation to the FEC of each of the nominees to the Commission, whose responsibilities include overseeing the campaign finance activities of Senators and their campaign opponents.

As you know, the pending FEC appointments include a controversial nomination. It appears that efforts are being made to bypass the normal process used to confirm Presidential appointments in order to ensure this controversial nominee's confirmation by packaging him with the other FEC nominees to have just one vote on all four of the nominees together, thereby evading a specific vote on the controversial nominee.

This would not only be unfair and undemocratic, but also would be in direct conflict with the precedent established the last time the Senate considered a controversial nominee to the FEC.

In 2000, then-Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-MS) provided for a separate vote in the Senate for a controversial FEC nominee. That nominee was confirmed by a vote of 64 to 35.

As far as we can see, the only reason for forcing the Senate to take a single bloc vote on the four pending FEC nominees appears to be to prevent a majority of the Senators from voting to reject one of the nominees. This is an unjustifiable and indefensible basis for denying regular order in the Senate and preventing individual votes on each of the four FEC nominees.

We strongly urge you to prevent a manipulative, undemocratic and unfair process from being used to confirm a nominee who otherwise might be rejected if regular order prevailed and separate votes took place on each of the FEC nominees.

We strongly urge you to ensure that separate votes occur in the Senate on each of the four nominees to serve on the FEC.

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