

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 65

To express the sense of the Senate on consideration of comprehensive
campaign finance reform.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 18, 1997

Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. DORGAN) submitted the following
resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration

RESOLUTION

To express the sense of the Senate on consideration of
comprehensive campaign finance reform.

Whereas spending on Federal election campaigns has increased to an estimated \$2.65 billion in the most recent election cycle, a threefold increase over campaign spending just twenty years ago, even after adjusting for inflation;

Whereas, in the 1995–1996 election cycle, the Democratic Party committees raised \$332 million, a 73-percent increase over the \$192 million raised four years earlier, and the Republican party committees raised \$549 million, a 74-percent increase over the \$316 million they raised four years earlier;

Whereas overall campaign spending for congressional races has risen from \$99 million in 1976 to \$626 million in 1996, a more than sixfold increase;

Whereas, since 1992, when political parties were first required to report soft money contributions to the Federal Election Commission, these contributions, which are raised outside Federal election law, have tripled, from \$86 million in 1992 to over \$263 million in the last election cycle;

Whereas there has been a proliferation of negative “issue” ads paid for by political parties and interest groups to influence Federal elections, further increasing the cost of campaigns;

Whereas as political campaigns have become longer, costlier and more negative, voter apathy has increased and voter participation in Presidential elections has declined from 60 percent in 1948–1968, to 53 percent from 1972–1992, to an all-time low of 49 percent in 1996;

Whereas these trends will continue if Congress fails to enact comprehensive campaign finance reform;

Whereas the more than 6,700 pages of hearing records, 49 days of testimony before 8 different congressional committees, 15 committee reports from 6 different committees and 113 Senate floor votes, constitute a sufficient Senate record on campaign finance reform; and

Whereas campaign finance reform has been filibustered in the Senate 17 times in the last ten years: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that the
- 2 Senate should proceed to the consideration of comprehen-

1 sive campaign finance reform that reduces spending on po-
2 litical campaigns and curtails the influence of special in-
3 terest money in Federal elections by no later than May
4 31, 1997, and adopt as a goal the final enactment of such
5 legislation by no later than July 4, 1997.

