



National Congress of American Indians

# NCAI News

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## **Anti-Indian Provision Possible in Campaign Finance Reform Measure**

On January 23, 2002, the House of Representatives received the last of the 218 signatures needed for a discharge petition to force a vote on campaign finance reform on the House floor. Last summer, Representative Robert Simmons (R-CT) proposed an amendment that “would ensure that Indian tribes are treated like individuals for the purposes of yearly aggregate amounts” under the Federal Elections Campaign Act (FECA). Fortunately, the amendment was tabled before the entire campaign finance reform debate deteriorated last July. However, similar anti-Indian amendments are anticipated when Congress prepares the bill for a vote.

The FECA sets a limit of \$25,0000 in contributions to federal campaigns in any calendar year for individuals. However, those limits do not apply to groups – such as partnership, political action committees, homeowner associations, cooperatives or other groups. The Federal Election Commission, in a May 2000 opinion, recognized that FECA treats Indian tribes as other groups or entities, and thus, tribes are not subject to the limits for individuals.

Please send letters to your Congressional delegation as well as to the leadership of the Senate Indian Affairs and Commerce Committees, the House Resources, Administration, and Rules Committees, and the House Native American Caucus. A congressional directory with membership lists and member contact information for these committees and more is available on our website, [www.ncai.org](http://www.ncai.org), by clicking “[Send policymakers a message from Indian Country!](#)” then clicking on the tab for “[elected officials](#)” and selecting “[congressional directory](#).” You also can search for your own elected officials from this section of our site.

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