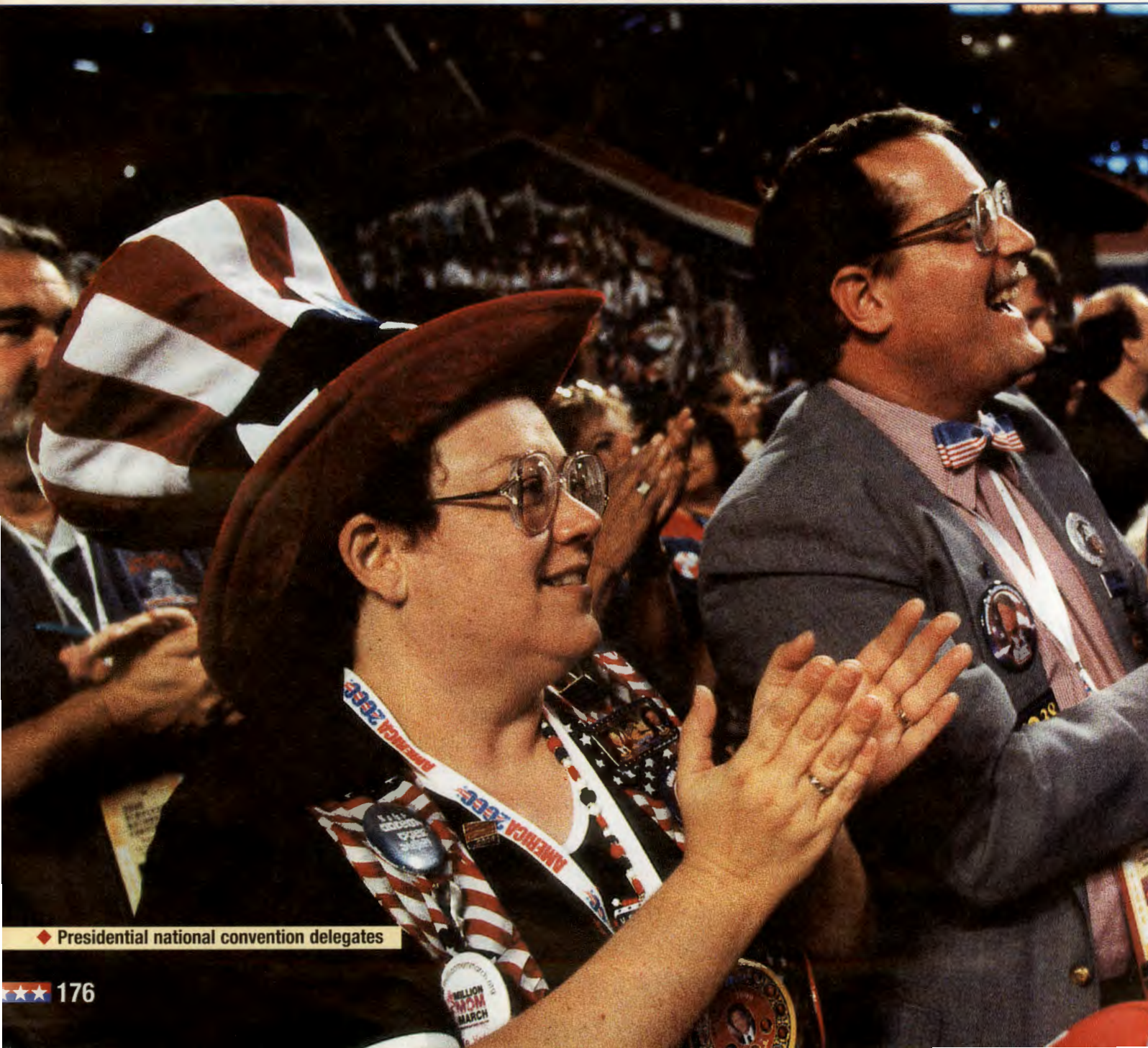


# The Electoral Process

*“Any American who cannot bother to vote and who thinks that a single vote does not matter is letting America down.”*

—Marian Wright Edelman (1992)

Democracy relies on the willingness of the people to participate—and to participate intelligently—in every aspect of the electoral process.



◆ Presidential national convention delegates





## Standards Preview

**H-SS 12.2.4** Understand the obligations of civic-mindedness, including voting, being informed on civic issues, volunteering and performing public service, and serving in the military or alternative service.

**H-SS 12.3.1** Explain how civil society provides opportunities for individuals to associate for social, cultural, religious, economic, and political purposes.

**H-SS 12.6.1** Analyze the origin, development, and role of political parties, noting those occasional periods in which there was only one major party or were more than two major parties.

**H-SS 12.6.2** Discuss the history of the nomination process for presidential candidates and the increasing importance of primaries in general elections.

**H-SS 12.6.3** Evaluate the roles of polls, campaign advertising, and the controversies over campaign funding.

**H-SS 12.6.4** Describe the means that citizens use to participate in the political process (e.g., voting, campaigning, lobbying, filing a legal challenge, demonstrating, petitioning, picketing, running for political office).

# Chapter 7 in Brief

## SECTION 1

### *The Nominating Process* (pp.178–186)

- ★ The nominating process is critically important to democratic government.
- ★ Five major nominating methods are used in American politics.
- ★ The most widely used nominating method today is the direct primary.

## SECTION 2

### *Elections* (pp.188–194)

- ★ The election process is regulated mostly by State law.
- ★ Most ballots are cast at polling places in thousands of precincts around the country. However, absentee voting, early voting, and vote-by-mail are becoming increasingly common.
- ★ Every State now uses the Australian ballot, which is of either the party-column or the office-group type.
- ★ Various types of electronic voting and/or vote-counting devices are rapidly replacing both lever-operated voting machines and punch-card ballot devices in most States today.

## SECTION 3

### *Money and Elections* (pp.196–202)

- ★ Money plays a key role in politics but presents serious problems to democratic government.
- ★ Most campaign money comes from private sources, including political action committees (PACs).
- ★ Federal campaign laws are administered by the Federal Election Commission (FEC).
- ★ Loopholes in campaign finance laws allow candidates and contributors to evade some regulations.



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## Section Preview

### OBJECTIVES

1. **Explain** why the nominating process is a critical first step in the election process.
2. **Describe** self-announcement, the caucus, and the convention as nominating methods.
3. **Discuss** the direct primary as the principal nominating method used in the United States today.
4. **Understand** why some candidates use the petition as a nominating device.

### WHY IT MATTERS

The nominating process narrows the field of possible candidates for office. It is thus an essential part of an election. The caucus and convention were important nominating methods in the past. The direct primary has largely replaced them. Self-announcement and petitions are also used today as nominating devices.

### POLITICAL DICTIONARY

- ★ nomination
- ★ general election
- ★ caucus
- ★ direct primary
- ★ closed primary
- ★ open primary
- ★ blanket primary
- ★ runoff primary
- ★ nonpartisan election

**S**uppose your teacher stood in front of the class and said: “Here’s a \$1,000 bill. Who’d like to have it?” You, and everyone else in the room, would promptly say, or at least think: “Me!” Suppose the teacher then said: “Okay, we’ll hold an election. The person who wins the most votes gets the money.”

What would happen? If the election were held immediately, it is likely that each member of the class would vote for himself or herself. A few might vote for a friend. Almost certainly, however, the election would end in a tie. No one would win the money.

But suppose the teacher said: “We’ll hold the election tomorrow.” What do you think

would happen then? As you think about the answer to that question, you begin to get a sense of the practical importance of the nominating process—the first step in the process of electing candidates to office.

## A Critical First Step

The nominating process is the process of candidate selection. **Nomination**—the naming of those who will seek office—is a critically important step in the election process.

You have already seen two major illustrations of the significance of the nomination process. In Chapter 5, you read about the making of nominations (1) as a prime function of political parties in the United States, and (2) as a leading reason for the decentralized character of the two major parties.

The nominating process also has a very real impact on the exercise of the right to vote. In the typical election in this country, voters can make only one of two choices for each office on the ballot. They can vote for the Republican or they can vote for the Democratic candidate.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Other choices are sometimes listed, of course—minor party or independent nominees. These are not often meaningful alternatives, however; most voters choose not to “waste” their votes on candidates who cannot win. Also, nonpartisan elections are an exception to this statement since candidates are not identified by party labels.

► Campaign signs urging voters to support particular candidates appear in towns and cities across the country before elections.





## Self-announced Candidates



**George Wallace**  
Four-time Democratic governor of Alabama, Wallace won 13% of the popular vote in 1968 as the populist candidate of the newly formed American Independent Party.



**Eugene McCarthy**  
A representative and senator from Minnesota (1949–1971), McCarthy sought the Democratic nomination for President in 1968 as a critic of the Vietnam War. He ran in 1976 as an independent, winning 0.9% of the popular vote.



**John Anderson**  
A Republican representative from Illinois (1961–1981), Anderson ran for President as an independent in 1980, winning 6.7% of the popular vote.



**Ross Perot**  
Business executive and billionaire Ross Perot ran as an independent for President in 1992, winning 19% of the popular vote. (In 1996, Perot received 8% of the popular vote as the Reform Party nominee.)

**Interpreting Charts** These presidential candidates made use of self-announcement as a nominating device. (a) *Why do some candidates choose self-announcement as a method for getting on the ballot?* (b) *How might a self-announced candidate affect the ultimate outcome of an election?* **H-SS 12.6.4**

This is another way of saying that we have a two-party system in the United States. It is also another way to say that the nominating stage is a critically important part of the electoral process. Those who make nominations place real, very practical limits on the choices that voters can make in an election.

In one-party constituencies (those areas where one party regularly wins elections), the nominating process is usually the only point at which there is any real contest for a public office. Once the dominant party has made its nomination, the general election is little more than a formality.

Dictatorial regimes point up the importance of the nominating process. Many of them hold **general elections**—regularly scheduled elections at which voters make the final selection of officeholders—much as democracies do. But typically, the ballots used in those elections list only one candidate for each office—the candidate of the ruling clique; and those candidates regularly win with majorities approaching 100 percent.

There are five ways in which nominations are made in the United States. They include (1) self-announcement, (2) caucus, (3) convention, (4) direct primary, and (5) petition.

### Self-Announcement

Self-announcement is the oldest form of the nominating process in American politics. First used in colonial times, it is still often found at the small-town and rural levels in many parts of the country.

The method is quite simple. A person who wants to run for office simply announces that fact. Modesty or local custom may dictate that someone else make the candidate's announcement, but, still, the process amounts to the same thing.

Self-announcement is sometimes used by someone who failed to win a regular party nomination or by someone unhappy with the party's choice. Note that whenever a write-in candidate appears in an election, the self-announcement process has been used. In recent history, four prominent presidential contenders have made



## Nominating and Electing a Candidate

### Ways to Nominate a Candidate



**Interpreting Diagrams** Nominations narrow the field of candidates for the general election. **Why should voters participate in the nominating process?** **H-SS 12.6.2**

use of the process: George Wallace, who declared himself to be the American Independent Party's nominee in 1968; and independent candidates Eugene McCarthy in 1976; John Anderson in 1980; and Ross Perot in 1992. And all of the 135 candidates who sought to replace Governor Gray Davis of California in that State's recall election in 2003—including the winner, Arnold Schwarzenegger—were self-starters.

## The Caucus

As a nominating device, a **caucus** is a group of like-minded people who meet to select the candidates they will support in an upcoming election. The first caucus nominations were made during the later colonial period, probably in Boston in the 1720s.<sup>2</sup> John Adams described the caucus this way in 1763:

PRIMARY  
Sources

*“This day learned that the Caucus Club meets at certain Times in the Garret of Tom Dawes, the Adjutant of the Boston Regiment. He has a large House, and he has a moveable Partition in his Garret, which he takes down, and the whole Club meets in one Room. There they smoke tobacco till you cannot see from one End of the Garret to the other. There they drink flip I suppose, and they choose a Moderator, who puts Questions to the Vote regularly, and select Men, Assessors, Collectors, Wardens, Fire Wards, and Representatives are Regularly chosen before they are chosen in the Town.”*

—Charles Francis Adams (ed.),  
*The Works of John Adams (1856)*

Originally the caucus was a private meeting consisting of a few influential figures in the community. As political parties appeared in the late 1700s, they soon took over the device and began to broaden the membership of the caucus.

The coming of independence brought the need to nominate candidates for State offices: governor, lieutenant governor, and others above the local level. The legislative caucus—a meeting of a party's members in the State legislature—took on the job. At the national level, both the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans in Congress were, by 1800, choosing their presidential and vice-presidential candidates through the congressional caucus.

The legislative and congressional caucuses were quite practical in their day. Transportation and communication were difficult at best. Since legislators already gathered regularly in a central place, it made sense for them to take on the nominating responsibility. The spread of democracy, especially in the newer States on the frontier, spurred opposition to caucuses, however. More and more, people condemned them for their closed, unrepresentative character.

Criticism of the caucus reached its peak in the early 1820s. The supporters of three of the

<sup>2</sup>The origin of the term *caucus* is not clear. Most authorities suggest that it comes from the word *caulkers*, because the Boston Caucus Club met at times in a room formerly used as a meeting place by caulkers in Boston's shipyards. (Caulkers made ships watertight by filling seams or cracks in the hulls of sailing vessels with tar or oakum.)



leading contenders for the presidency in 1824—Andrew Jackson, Henry Clay, and John Quincy Adams—boycotted the Democratic-Republicans’ congressional caucus that year. In fact, Jackson and his supporters made “King Caucus” a leading campaign issue. The other major aspirant, William H. Crawford of Georgia, became the caucus nominee at a meeting attended by fewer than one third of the Democratic-Republican Party’s members in Congress.

Crawford ran a poor third in the electoral college balloting in 1824, and the reign of King Caucus at the national level was ended. With its death in presidential politics, the caucus system soon withered at the State and local levels, as well.

The caucus is still used to make local nominations in some places, especially in New England. There, a caucus is open to all members of a party, and it only faintly resembles the original closed and private process.

## The Convention

As the caucus method collapsed, the convention system took its place. The first national convention to nominate a presidential candidate was held by a minor party, the Anti-Masons, in Baltimore in 1831. The newly formed National Republican (soon to become Whig) Party also held a convention later that same year. The Democrats picked up the practice in 1832. All major-party presidential nominees have been chosen by conventions ever since. By the 1840s, conventions had become the principal means for making nominations at every level in American politics.

On paper, the convention process seems perfectly suited to representative government. A party’s members meet in a local caucus to pick candidates for local offices and, at the same time, to select delegates to represent them at a county convention.<sup>3</sup>

At the county convention, the delegates nominate candidates for county offices and select delegates to the next rung on the convention

<sup>3</sup>The meetings at which delegates to local conventions are chosen are still often called *caucuses*. Earlier, they were also known as primaries—that is, first meetings. The use of that name gave rise to the term *direct primary*, to distinguish that newer nominating method from the convention process.

ladder, usually the State convention. There, the delegates from the county conventions pick the party’s nominees for governor and other State-wide offices. State conventions also send delegates to the party’s national convention, where the party selects its presidential and vice-presidential candidates.

In theory, the will of the party’s rank and file membership is passed up through each of its representative levels. Practice soon pointed up the weaknesses of the theory, however, as party bosses found ways to manipulate the process. By playing with the selection of delegates, usually at the local levels, they soon dominated the entire system.

As a result, the caliber of most conventions declined at all levels, especially during the late 1800s. How low some of them fell can be seen in this description of a Cook County, Illinois, convention in 1896:

**PRIMARY Sources** “Of [723] delegates, those who had been on trial for murder numbered 17; sentenced to the penitentiary for murder or manslaughter and served sentence, 7; served terms in the penitentiary for burglary, 36; served terms in the penitentiary for picking pockets, 2; served



◀ **Campaign Ribbons** These precursors of today’s political buttons were widely used in the 1840s to 1890s.



terms in the penitentiary for arson, 1; . . . jailbirds identified by detectives, 84; keepers of gambling houses, 7; keepers of houses of ill-fame, 2; convicted of mayhem, 3; ex-prize fighters, 11; poolroom proprietors, 2; saloon keepers, 265; . . . political employees, 148; no occupation, 71; . . . ”

—R.M. Easley, “The Sine qua Non of Caucus Reform,” *Review of Reviews* (Sept. 1897)

Many people had hailed the change from caucus to convention as a major change for the better in American politics. The abuses of the new device soon dashed their hopes. By the 1870s, the convention system was itself under attack as a major source of evil in American politics. By the 1910s, the direct primary had replaced the convention in most States as the principal nominating method in American politics.

Conventions still play a major role in the nominating process in some States—notably, Connecticut, Michigan, South Dakota, Utah, and Virginia. And, as you will see, no adequate substitute for the device has yet been found at the presidential level.

## The Direct Primary

A **direct primary** is an intra-party election. It is held within a party to pick that party’s candidates for the general election. Wisconsin adopted the first State-wide direct primary law in 1903; several

other States soon followed its lead. Every State now makes at least some provision for its use.

In most States, State law requires that the major parties use the primary to choose their candidates for the United States Senate and House of Representatives, for the governorship and all other State offices, and for most local offices as well. In a few States, however, different combinations of convention and primary are used to pick candidates for the top offices.

In Michigan, for example, the major parties choose their candidates for the U.S. Senate and House, the governorship, and the State legislature in primaries. Nominees for lieutenant governor, secretary of state, and attorney general are picked by conventions.<sup>4</sup>

Although the primaries are party-nominating elections, they are closely regulated by law in most States. The State usually sets the dates on which primaries are held, and it regularly conducts them, too. The State, not the parties, provides polling places and election officials, registration lists and ballots, and otherwise polices the process.

Two basic forms of the direct primary are in use today: (1) the closed primary and (2) the open primary. The major difference between the two lies in the answer to this question: Who can vote in a party’s primary—only qualified voters who are party members, or *any* qualified voter?

## The Closed Primary

Today, 24 States provide for the **closed primary**—a party’s nominating election in which only declared party members can vote. The party’s primary is closed to all but those party members.<sup>5</sup>

In most of the closed primary States, party membership is established by registration; see page 154. When voters appear at their polling

**Interpreting Political Cartoons**  
What aspect of primary campaigning does this cartoon suggest?

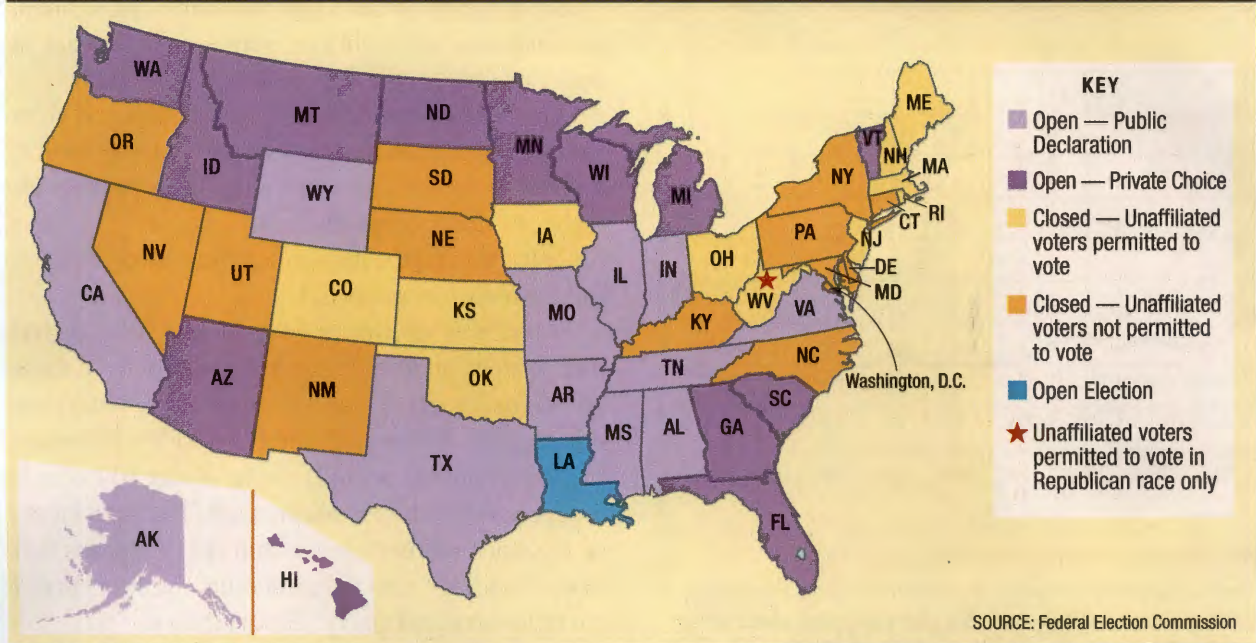


“MY FORMER OPPONENT IS SUPPORTING ME IN THE GENERAL ELECTION. PLEASE DISREGARD ALL THE THINGS I HAVE SAID ABOUT HIM IN THE PRIMARY.”

<sup>4</sup>In most States, minor parties are required to make their nominations by other, more difficult processes, usually in conventions or by petition. For the significance of this point, see Chapter 5.

<sup>5</sup>The Supreme Court has held that a State’s closed primary law cannot forbid a party to allow independent voters to participate in its primary if the party itself chooses to do so. In *Tashjian v. Republican Party of Connecticut*, 1986, the Court struck down such a State law. Note that the Court did not outlaw the closed primary in this case, nor did it hold that a political party *must* allow Independents to vote in its primary. The Court found that the Connecticut law violated the 1st and 14th Amendment guarantees of the right of association—here the right of Connecticut Republicans to associate with Independents (invite Independents to join them) in making GOP nominations.

## Forms of Primaries in State Elections, 2005



### Interpreting Maps What form of the primary is used in your State? H-SS 12.6.2

places on primary election day, their names are checked against the poll books and each voter is handed the primary ballot of the party in which he or she is registered. The voter can mark *only* that party's ballot; he or she can vote only in that party's primary.

In some of the closed primary States, however, a voter can change his or her party registration on election day. In those States, then, the primary is not as completely "closed" as it is elsewhere.

### The Open Primary

The **open primary** is a party's nominating election in which *any* qualified voter can cast a ballot. Although it is the form in which the direct primary first appeared, it is now found in only 26 States.

When voters go to the polls in some open primary States, they are handed a ballot of each party holding a primary. Usually, they receive two ballots, those of the Republican and the Democratic parties. Then, in the privacy of the voting booth, each voter marks the ballot of the party in whose primary he or she chooses to vote. In other open primary States, a voter must ask for the ballot of the party in

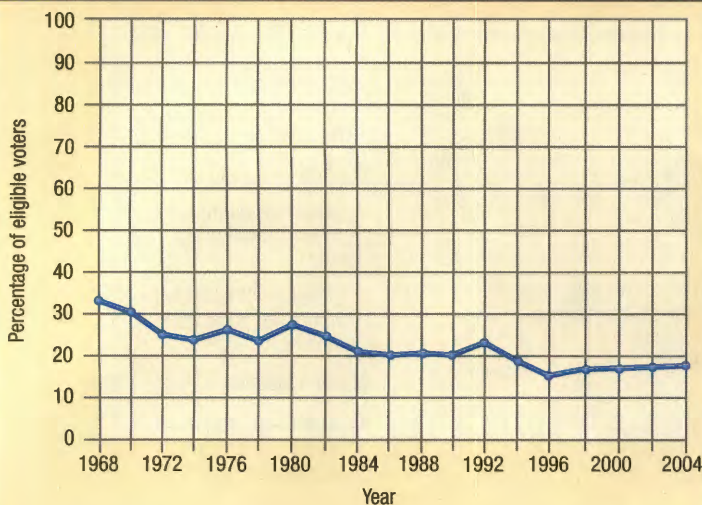
whose primary he or she wants to vote. That is, each voter must make a *public* choice of party in order to vote in the primary.

Through 2000, three States used a different version of the open primary—the **blanket primary**, sometimes called the "wide-open primary." Washington adopted the first blanket primary law in 1935. Alaska followed suit in 1970, and California did so in 1996. In a blanket primary, every voter received the same ballot—a long one that listed *every* candidate, regardless of party, for every nomination to be made at the primary. Voters could participate however they chose. They could confine themselves to one party's primary; or they could switch back and forth between the parties' primaries, voting to nominate a Democrat for one office, a Republican for another, and so on down the ballot.

The Supreme Court found California's version of the blanket primary unconstitutional in 2000, however. In *California Democratic Party v. Jones*, the High Court held that that process violated the 1st and 14th amendments' guarantees of the right of association. It ruled that a State cannot force a political party to associate with outsiders—that is, with members of other



## Voter Turnout in Statewide Primaries



SOURCE: Committee for the Study of the American Electorate



**Interpreting Graphs** What does this chart suggest about voter interest in statewide primaries from 1968 to 2004?

parties or with independents—when it picks its candidates for public office.

As a result, the blanket primary is a thing of the past. Alaska, California, and Washington now provide for the more traditional form of the open primary.

Louisiana has yet another form of the open primary, which was not affected by the Court's decision in *Jones*. Its unique "open-election law" provides for what amounts to a combination primary and election. The names of all the people who seek nominations are listed by office on a single primary ballot, regardless of party. A contender who wins more than 50 percent of the primary votes wins the office. In these cases, the primary becomes the election. In contests where there is no majority winner, the two top vote-getters, again regardless of party, face off in the general election.

### Closed vs. Open Primary

The two basic forms of the primary have caused arguments for decades. Those who favor the closed primary regularly make three arguments in support of it:

1. It prevents one party from "raiding" the other's primary in the hope of nominating weaker candidates in the other party.

2. It helps make candidates more responsive to the party, its platform, and its members.

3. It helps make voters more thoughtful, because they must choose between the parties in order to vote in the primaries.

The critics of the closed primary contend that:

1. It compromises the secrecy of the ballot, because it forces voters to make their party preferences known in public, and

2. It tends to exclude independent voters from the nomination process.<sup>6</sup>

Advocates of the open primary believe that their system of nominating addresses both of these criticisms. In many open primaries, (1) voters are not forced to make their party preferences known in public, and (2) the tendency to exclude independent voters is eliminated. The opponents of the open primary insist that it (1) permits primary "raiding" and (2) undercuts the concepts of party loyalty and party responsibility.

### The Runoff Primary

In most States, candidates need to win only a plurality of the votes cast in the primary to win their party's nomination.<sup>7</sup> (Remember, a *plurality* is the greatest number of votes won by any candidate, whether a *majority* or not.) In 10 States,<sup>8</sup> however, an absolute majority is needed to carry a primary. If no one wins a majority in a race, a **runoff primary** is held a few weeks later. In that runoff, the two top vote-getters in the first party primary face one another for the party's nomination, and the winner of that vote becomes the nominee.

### The Nonpartisan Primary

In most States all or nearly all of the elected school and municipal offices are filled in **nonpartisan elections**. These are elections in which candidates

<sup>6</sup>See the discussion of *Tashjian v. Republican Party of Connecticut*, 1986, in footnote 5. The closed primary States have now amended their primary laws to comply with that decision.

<sup>7</sup>In Iowa, if no candidate wins at least 35 percent of the votes in a primary, the party must then nominate its candidate for that office by convention.

<sup>8</sup>Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas—and Louisiana under its unique "open election" law. In North Carolina a runoff is held when no candidate wins 40 percent of the primary vote. In South Dakota, if no one who seeks a party's nomination for governor, U.S. senator, or U.S. representative wins at least 35 percent, the party's candidate for that office must be picked in a runoff primary two weeks later.



are not identified by party labels. About half of all State judges are chosen on nonpartisan ballots, as well. The nomination of candidates for these offices takes place on a nonpartisan basis, too, often in nonpartisan primaries.

Typically, a contender who wins a clear majority in a nonpartisan primary then runs unopposed in the general election, subject only to write-in opposition. In many States, however, a candidate who wins a majority in the primary is declared elected at that point. If there is no majority winner, the names of the two top contenders are placed on the general election ballot.

The primary first appeared as a partisan nominating device. Many have long argued that it is not well suited for use in nonpartisan elections. Instead, they favor the petition method, which you will consider later in this section.

### Evaluation of the Primary

The direct primary, whether open or closed, is an *intraparty* nominating election. It came to American politics as a reform of the boss-dominated convention system. It was intended to take the nominating function away from the party organization and put it in the hands of the party's membership.

The basic facts about the primary have never been very well understood by most voters, however. So, in closed primary States, many voters resent having to declare their party preference. And, in both open and closed primary States, many are upset because they cannot express their support for candidates in more than one party. Many are also annoyed by the "bed-sheet ballots" they regularly see in primary elections—not realizing that the use of the direct primary almost automatically means a long ballot. And some are concerned because the primary (and, in particular, its closed form) tends to exclude independents from the nominating process.

These factors, combined with a lack of appreciation of the importance of primaries, result in this unfortunate fact: Nearly everywhere, voter turnout in primary elections is usually less than half what it is in general elections.

Primary campaigns can be quite costly. The fact that the successful contenders must then wage—and finance—a general election campaign

adds to the money problems that bedevil American politics. Unfortunately, the financial facts of political life in the United States mean that some well-qualified people do not seek public office simply because they cannot muster the necessary funds.

The nominating process, whatever its form, can also have a very divisive effect on a party. Remember, the process takes place *within* the party—so, when there is a contest for a nomination, that is where the contest occurs. A bitter fight in the primaries can so wound and divide a party that it cannot recover in time to present a united front for the general election. Many a primary fight has cost a party an election.

Finally, because many voters are not very well informed, the primary places a premium on name familiarity. That is, it often gives an edge to a contender who has a well-known name or a name that sounds like that of some well-known person. But, notice, name familiarity in and of itself has little or nothing to do with a candidate's qualifications for office.

Obviously, the primary is not without its problems, nor is any other nominating device. Still, the primary does give a party's members the opportunity to participate at the very core of the political process.



**Interpreting Political Cartoons** What aspect of the primary process does this cartoon critique?





▲ **Getting on the Ballot** Petitions are widely used as nominating devices, particularly in nonpartisan elections at the local level.

## The Presidential Primary

The presidential primary developed as an offshoot of the direct primary. It is not a nominating device, however. Rather, the presidential primary is an election that is held as one part of the process by which presidential candidates are chosen.

The presidential primary is a very complex process. It is one or both of two things, depending on the State involved. It is a process in which a party's voters elect some or all of a State party organization's delegates to that party's national convention; and/or it is a preference election in which voters can choose (vote their preference) among various contenders for a party's presidential nomination. Much of what happens in presidential politics in

the early months of every fourth year centers on this very complicated process. (See Chapter 13 for an extended discussion of the presidential primary.)

## Petition

One other nominating method is used fairly widely at the local level in American politics today—nomination by petition. Where this process is used, candidates for public office are nominated by means of petitions signed by a certain required number of qualified voters in the election district.<sup>9</sup>

Nomination by petition is found most widely at the local level, chiefly for nonpartisan school posts and municipal offices in medium-sized and smaller communities. It is also the process usually required by State law for nominating minor party and independent candidates. (Remember, the States often purposely make the process of getting on the ballot difficult for those candidates.)

The details of the petition process vary widely from State to State, and even from one city to the next. Usually, however, the higher the office and/or the larger the constituency represented by the office, the greater the number of signatures needed for nomination.

<sup>9</sup>The petition device is also an important part of the recall and the initiative and referendum processes; see Chapter 24.

## Section 1 Assessment

### Key Terms and Main Ideas

1. For what reasons is the making of **nominations** so important in the electoral process?
2. Explain the difference between a **closed primary** and an **open primary**.
3. What is a **nonpartisan election**?
4. What is a **caucus**, and what events led to its demise as a method for nominating candidates?

### Critical Thinking

5. **Making Decisions** You read in this section that voter turnout in primaries is usually less than half of what it is in general elections. What steps could you take in your community to increase voter turnout in primary elections?

6. **Identifying Central Issues** Explain why the nominating process is a vital first step in the electoral process.



### Standards Monitoring Online

For: Self-quiz with vocabulary practice  
Web Code: mqa-2071



For: An activity on the nominating process  
Web Code: mqd-2071



## Establishing Primary Elections



Analysis Skills HR4, HI3

*In a 1901 speech to the Wisconsin legislature, Governor Robert La Follette called for an end to caucus and convention nominations and for the nomination of each party's candidates directly by the voters. Shortly thereafter, Wisconsin became the first State to establish Statewide primary elections.*

**I**t is a fundamental principle of this republic that each citizen should have equal voice in government. This is recognized and guaranteed to him through the ballot. . . . Since government, with us, is conducted by the representatives of some political party, the citizen's voice in making and administering the laws is expressed through his party ballot. This privilege is vital. . . . It is here government begins. . . . Control lost at this point is never regained. . . .

For many years the evils of the caucus and convention system have multiplied. . . . The system in all its details is inherently bad. It not only favors, but . . . produces manipulation, scheming, trickery, fraud and corruption. The delegate elected in caucus is nominally [supposedly] the agent of the voter to act for him in convention. Too frequently . . . he acts not for the voter, but serves his own purpose instead. This fact in itself taints the trust from the outset, and poisons the system at its very source. No legitimate business could survive under a system where authority to transact its vital matters were delegated and re-delegated to agents and sub-agents, who controlled their own selection . . . and were responsible to nobody. . . .

The officials nominated by the [party] machine become its faithful servants and surrender judgment to its will. This they must do in self-preservation or they are retired to public life. Wielding a power



*Governor Robert La Follette  
1855-1925*

substantially independent of the voter, it is quite unnecessary to regard him as an important factor in government . . . .

It is of primary importance that the public official should hold himself directly accountable to the citizen. This he will do only when he owes his nomination directly to the citizen. If between the citizen and the official there is a complicated system of caucuses and conventions, by the easy manipulation of which the selection of candidates is controlled by some other agency or power, then the official will so render his services as to have the approval of such agency or power. The overwhelming demand of the people of this state, whom you represent, is that such intervening power and authority, and the complicated system which sustains it, shall be torn down and cast aside. . . .

### Analyzing Primary Sources

1. Why did La Follette think that an elected official selected by convention will be more loyal to party bosses than to the voters?
2. According to La Follette, how would primaries make officials more accountable to the people?
3. What argument did La Follette use to show that primary elections are the foundation of government in a republic?



## Section Preview

## OBJECTIVES

1. **Analyze** how the administration of elections in the United States helps make democracy work.
2. **Define** the role of precincts and polling places in the election process.
3. **Describe** the various ways in which voters can cast their ballots.
4. **Outline** the role that voting devices play in the election process.

## WHY IT MATTERS

The election process lies at the very heart of the democratic concept. Indeed, it is impossible to picture a democratic government in which popular elections are not held.

## POLITICAL DICTIONARY

- ★ absentee voting
- ★ coattail effect
- ★ precinct
- ★ polling place
- ★ ballot

**M**any high school students are not old enough to vote. In some parts of the country, however, high school students can serve on local election boards. First in Hawaii and Oregon and now in several States, 16- and 17-year-olds can become full-fledged members of the panels that administer elections.

Americans hold more elections and vote more often than most people realize. Indeed, Sundays and holidays are about the only days of the year on which people do not go to the polls somewhere in the United States. Americans also elect far more officeholders than most people realize—in fact, more than 500,000 of them.



▲ **Election Observers** In many parts of the world, election observers are needed to ensure that elections are free and fair. Here, former President Jimmy Carter monitors an election in Haiti.

## The Administration of Elections

Democratic government cannot succeed unless elections are free, honest, and accurate. Many people see the details of the election process as too complicated, too legalistic, too dry and boring to worry about. Those who do miss the vital part those details play in making democracy work. *How* something can be done very often shapes what is in fact done—and that fact is as true in politics as it is in other matters. The often lengthy and closely detailed provisions of election law are meant to protect the integrity of the electoral process. And those provisions often have a telling effect on the outcome of elections. You saw how important the details of election law can be when you looked at voter qualifications and voter registration in the last chapter and again just a few pages ago when you considered the complexities of the direct primary.

## Extent of Federal Control

Nearly all elections in the United States are held to choose the more than 500,000 persons who hold elective office in the more than 87,000 units of government at the State and local levels. It is quite understandable, then, that most election law in the United States is *State*—not federal—law.

Despite this fact, a body of federal election law does exist. The Constitution gives



Congress the power to fix “[t]he Times, Places, and Manner of holding Elections” of members of Congress.<sup>10</sup> Congress also has the power to set the time for choosing presidential electors, to set the date for casting the electoral votes, and to regulate other aspects of the presidential election process.<sup>11</sup>

Congress has set the date for holding congressional elections as the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November of every even-numbered year. It has set the same date every fourth year for the presidential election.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the next congressional elections will be held on November 7, 2006; and the next presidential election falls on November 4, 2008.

Congress has required the use of secret ballots and allowed the use of voting machines in federal elections. It has also acted to protect the right to vote, as you saw in Chapter 6; and it has prohibited various corrupt practices and regulated the financing of campaigns for federal office, as you will see in the pages ahead.

Congress expanded the body of federal election law with the passage of the Help America Vote Act of 2002. That law came in response to the many ballot and voter registration problems that plagued several States in the presidential election in 2000 (see pages 380–381).

In its major provisions, the new law requires the States to

- replace all their lever-operated and punch-card voting devices by 2006—a deadline that, in fact, most States failed to meet;
- upgrade their administration of elections, especially through the better training of local election officials and of those (mostly low-paid workers and volunteers) who work in precinct polling places on election day;
- centralize and computerize their voter registration systems, to facilitate the identification of qualified voters on election day and so minimize fraudulent voting;

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<sup>10</sup>Article I, Section 4, Clause 1; 17th Amendment; see pages 276 and 277.

<sup>11</sup>Article II, Section 1, Clause 4; 12th Amendment; see pages 378 and 379.

<sup>12</sup>Congress has made an exception for Alaska. Because of the possibility of severe weather in much of Alaska in early November, that State may, if it chooses, elect its congressional delegation and cast its presidential vote in October. So far, however, Alaska has used the November date.

- provide for provisional voting, so a person whose eligibility to vote has been challenged can cast a ballot that will be counted if it is later found that he or she, is in fact, qualified to vote.

State law deals with all other matters relating to national elections—and with all of the details of State and local elections, as well.

## Election Day

Most States hold their elections to fill State offices on the same date Congress has set for national elections: in November of every even-numbered year. The “Tuesday-after-the-first-Monday” formula prevents election day from falling on (1) Sundays (to maintain the principle of separation of church and state) and (2) the first day of the month, which is often payday and therefore peculiarly subject to campaign pressures.

Some States do fix other dates for some offices, however. Louisiana, Mississippi, New Jersey, and Virginia elect the governor, other executive officers, and State legislators in November of odd-numbered years. In Kentucky, the governor and other executive officers are chosen in odd-numbered years, but legislators are elected in even-numbered years. City, county, and other local election dates vary from State to State. When those elections are not held in November, they generally take place in the spring.

## Early Voting

Millions of Americans cast their ballots before election day. Indeed, some 20 million did so in 2004, many of them by **absentee voting**—a process by which they could vote without actually going to their polling places on election day. Almost everywhere, voters can apply for an absentee ballot some weeks before an election, then mark those ballots and return them to the local election office, usually by mail and before election day.

Absentee voting was originally intended to serve a relatively small group of voters, especially the ill or disabled and those who expected to be away from home on election day. Most States have broadened their laws over recent years, however—to the point where, in most of them, any qualified voter can now cast an absentee ballot.

More than half the States now also provide for another form of early voting. They allow



voters to cast their ballots at any time over a period of several days before an election—not as an absentee ballot but as though they were voting on election day itself.

### The Coattail Effect

The **coattail effect** occurs when a strong candidate running for an office at the top of the ballot helps attract voters to other candidates on the party's ticket. In effect, the lesser-known office seeker "rides the coattails" of the more prestigious personality. In 1980 and 1984, for example, Ronald Reagan's coattails helped many Republican candidates win office. The coattail effect is usually most apparent in presidential elections. However, a popular candidate for senator or governor can have the same kind of pulling power.

A reverse coattail effect can occur, too. This happens when a candidate for some major office is less than popular with many voters—for example, Barry Goldwater as the Republican presidential nominee in 1964, and George McGovern for the Democrats in 1972. President Jimmy Carter's coattails were also of the reverse variety in 1980.

Some people have long argued that all State and local elections should be held on dates other than those set for federal elections. This, they say, would help voters pay more attention to State and local candidates and issues and lessen the coattail effects of presidential contests.

### Precincts and Polling Places

A **precinct** is a voting district. Precincts are the smallest geographic units for the conduct of elections. State law regularly restricts their size, generally to an area with no more than 500 to 1,000 or so qualified voters. A **polling place**—the place where the voters who live in a precinct actually vote—is located somewhere in or near each precinct.

A precinct election board supervises the polling place and the voting process in each precinct. Typically, the county clerk or county board of elections draws precinct lines, fixes the location of each polling place, and picks the members of the precinct boards.

The precinct board opens and closes the polls at the times set by State law. In most States, the

polls are open from 7:00 or 8:00 A.M. to 7:00 or 8:00 P.M. The precinct election board must also see that the ballots and the ballot boxes or voting machines are available. It must make certain that only qualified voters cast ballots in the precinct. Often the board also counts the votes cast in the precinct and then sends the results to the proper place, usually to the county clerk or county board of elections.

Poll watchers, one from each party, are allowed at each polling place. They may challenge any person they believe is not qualified to vote, check to be sure that their own party's supporters do vote, and monitor the whole process, including the counting of the ballots.

### Casting the Ballot

A **ballot** is the device by which a voter registers a choice in an election.<sup>15</sup> It can take a number of different forms. Whatever its form, however, it is clearly an important and sensitive part of the election process.

Each State now provides for a secret ballot. That is, State law requires that ballots be cast in such manner that others cannot know how a person has voted.

Voting was a public process through much of the nation's earlier history, however. Paper ballots were used in some colonial elections, but voting was more commonly *viva voce*—by voice. Voters simply stated their choices to an election board. With suffrage limited to the privileged few, many people defended oral voting as the only "manly" way in which to participate. Whatever the merits of that view, the expansion of the electorate brought with it a marked increase in intimidation, vote buying, and other corruptions of the voting process.

Paper ballots were in general use by the mid-1800s. The first ones were unofficial—slips of paper that voters prepared themselves and dropped in the ballot box. Soon candidates and parties began to prepare ballots and hand them to voters to cast, sometimes paying them to do so. Those party ballots were often printed on distinctively colored paper, and

<sup>15</sup>The word comes from the Italian *ballotta*, "little ball," and reflects the practice of dropping black or white balls into a box to indicate a choice. The term *blackball* comes from the same practice.



## Office-Group and Party-Column Ballots

### OFFICE-GROUP BALLOT

Voters select each candidate by marking an X in the square

Candidates are grouped by office

Names are listed in random order

OFFICIAL BALLOT, GENERAL ELECTION	
<b>President and Vice President of the United States</b>	
Four year term. Vote for one only.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>BADNARIK, Michael/CAMPAGNA, Richard</b> Libertarian	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>KERRY, John/EDWARDS, John</b> Democratic	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>BUSH, George W./CHENEY, Dick</b> Republican	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>COBB, David/LAMARCHE, Patricia</b> Green	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Office of the United States Senate</b>	
Six year term. Vote for one only.	
<b>HOLDEN, Bob</b> Democrat	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>MACY, Elgar</b> Republican	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>KLINE, Richard</b> Reform	<input type="checkbox"/>

### PARTY-COLUMN BALLOT

Party symbol and name at the top of the column that lists all of the party's candidates running for office

OFFICIAL BALLOT, GENERAL ELECTION			
 <b>REPUBLICAN</b>	 <b>DEMOCRATIC</b>	 <b>LIBERTARIAN</b>	 <b>GREEN</b>
For President of the United States <b>GEORGE W. BUSH</b>	For President of the United States <b>JOHN KERRY</b>	For President of the United States <b>MICHAEL BADNARIK</b>	For President of the United States <b>DAVID COBB</b>
For Vice President of the United States <b>DICK CHENEY</b>	For Vice President of the United States <b>JOHN EDWARDS</b>	For Vice President of the United States <b>RICHARD CAMPAGNA</b>	For Vice President of the United States <b>PATRICIA LAMARCHE</b>
For United States Senator <b>ELGAR MACY</b>	For United States Senator <b>BOB HOLDEN</b>	For United States Senator <b>RICHARD KLINE</b>	

To vote for candidates of different parties, voters mark an X in the square next to the chosen candidate or candidates

**Interpreting Diagrams** By highlighting the office, rather than the party, an office-group ballot encourages split-ticket voting. **How does a party-column ballot encourage voters to vote along party lines?** **H-SS 12.6.1**

anyone watching could tell for whom voters were voting.

Political machines—local party organizations capable of mobilizing or “manufacturing” large numbers of votes on behalf of candidates for political office—flourished in many places in the latter 1800s. They fought all attempts to make voting a more dependably fair and honest process. The political corruption of the post-Civil War years brought widespread demand for ballot reforms.

### The Australian Ballot

A new voting arrangement was devised in Australia, where it was first used in an election in Victoria in 1856. Its successes there led to its use in other countries. By 1900 nearly all of the States were using it, and it remains the basic form of the ballot in this country today.

The Australian Ballot has four essential features:

1. It is printed at public expense;
2. It lists the names of all candidates in an election;

3. It is given out only at the polls, one to each qualified voter; and
4. It is marked in secret.

Two basic varieties of the Australian ballot have developed over the years. Most States now use the office-group ballot. Only a handful of States use the party-column ballot.

### The Office-Group Ballot

The office-group ballot is the original form of the Australian ballot. It is also sometimes called the Massachusetts ballot because of its early (1888) use there. On the office-group ballot, the candidates for an office are grouped together under the title of that office. Because the names of the candidates thus appear as a block, the form is also sometimes called the office-block ballot.

At first, the names of the candidates were listed in alphabetical order. Most States using the form now rotate the names—so that each candidate will have whatever psychological advantage there may be in having his or her name at the top of the list of candidates.



## The Party-Column Ballot

The party-column ballot is also known as the Indiana ballot, from its early (1889) use in that State. It lists each party's candidates in a column under the party's name.

Professional politicians tend to favor the party-column ballot. It encourages straight-ticket voting, especially if the party has a strong candidate at the head of the ticket. Most students of the political process favor the office-group form because it encourages voter judgment and split-ticket voting.

## Sample Ballots

Sample ballots, clearly marked as such, are available in most States before an election. In some States they are mailed to all voters, and they appear in most newspapers. They cannot be cast, but they can help voters prepare for an election.

First in Oregon (1907), and now in several States, an official voter's pamphlet is mailed to voters before every election. It lists all candidates and measures that will appear on the ballot. In Oregon, each candidate is allowed space to present his or her qualifications and position on the issues. Supporters and opponents of ballot measures are allowed space to present their arguments as well.

## Bedsheet Ballots

The ballot in a typical American election is lengthy, often and aptly called a "bedsheet" ballot. It frequently lists so many offices, candidates, and ballot measures that even the most well-informed voters have a difficult time marking it intelligently.

The long ballot came to American politics in the era of Jacksonian Democracy in the 1830s. Many held the view at the time that the greater the number of elective offices, the more democratic the governmental system. The idea remains widely accepted today.

Generally, the longest ballots are found at the local level, especially among the nation's 3,000-odd counties. The list of elected offices is likely to include several commissioners, a clerk, a sheriff, one or more judges, a prosecutor, coroner, treasurer, assessor, surveyor, school superintendent, engineer, sanitarian, and even the proverbial dogcatcher.

Critics of the bed-sheet ballot reject the notion that the more people you elect, the more democratic you are. Instead, they say, the fewer the offices voters have to fill, the better they can know the candidates and their qualifications. Those critics often point to the factor of "ballot fatigue"—that is, to the drop-off in voting that can run as high as 20 to 30 percent at or near the bottom of the typical (lengthy) ballot.

There seems little, if any, good reason to elect such local officials as clerks, coroners, surveyors, and engineers. Their jobs do not carry basic policy-making responsibilities. Rather, they carry out policies made by others. Many believe that to shorten the ballot and promote good government, the rule should be: Elect those who make public policies; appoint those whose job it is to administer those policies.

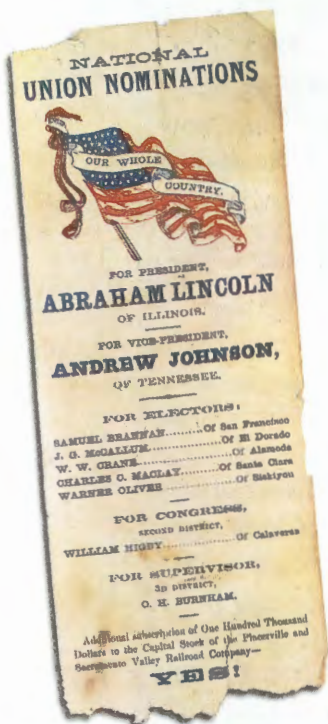
## Automated Voting

Well over half the votes now cast in national elections are cast on some type of voting machine—and, increasingly, on some type of electronic voting device.

Thomas Edison patented the first voting machine—the first mechanical device for the casting and counting of votes—in 1868, and his invention was first used in a public election in Locksport, New York, in 1892. The use of similar but much-improved devices soon spread to polling places across the country.

For the better part of a century, most voting machines were lever-operated, and quite cumbersome. Voters had to pull various levers in order to cast their ballots—one lever to open (unlock) the machine, others to indicate their choices of candidates, and yet another to close (lock) the machine and record their votes.

Those lever-operated machines did speed up the voting process; and they reduced both fraud and counting errors. The machines were quite expensive, however, and they also posed major



▲ **Campaign Ticket, 1864**  
Sometimes tickets such as these were cast as ballots.



storage and transport problems from one election to the next.

### Electronic Vote Counting

Electronic data processing (EDP) techniques were first applied to the voting process in the 1960s. California and Oregon led the way and EDP is now a vital part of that process in nearly every State.

For some years, the most widely used adaptations of EDP involved punch-card ballots, counted by computers. But punch-card ballots often produced problems—most frequently because voters failed to make clean punches. Their incomplete perforations left “hanging chads” that made the cards difficult or impossible for computers to read.

Punch-card ballots played a major role in the disputed presidential election vote count in Florida in 2000 (see pages 380–381); and that fiasco led to the passage of the Help America Vote Act of 2002. As we noted on page 189, that law requires the elimination of all punch-card voting devices (and all lever-operated voting machines, as well).

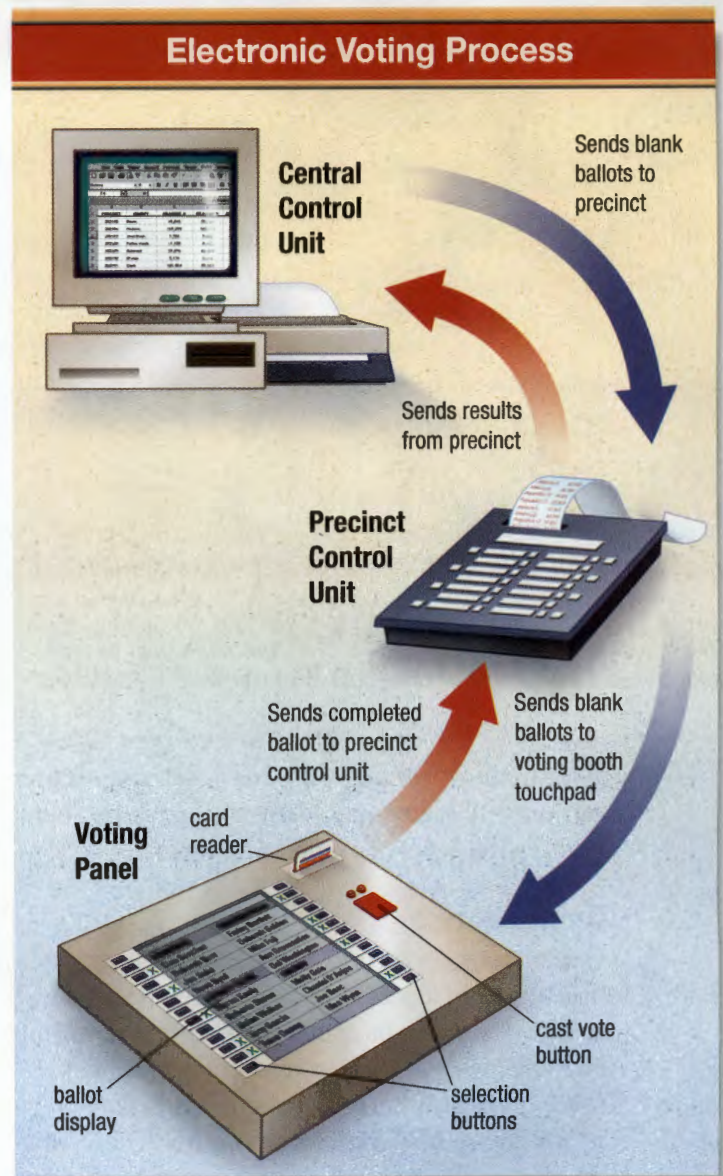
Most States are now turning to two other EDP-based voting systems. One of them involves paper ballots marked by voters and then counted by high-speed optical scanners. The other utilizes a touch-screen. See the illustration on this page for one version of touch-screen voting.

### Vote-by-Mail Elections

A number of States conduct some elections by mail. Voters receive a ballot in the mail, make their choices, then mail the ballot back to election officials. The first such election was held in Monterey County, California, in 1977; and the first large-scale use of mail-in ballots took place in San Diego in 1981.

Usually, vote-by-mail elections have been confined to the local level and to voting on city or county measures, not on candidates for local offices. A few States do choose local officials by mail-in ballots, however. In addition, vote-by-mail is an integral part of the absentee voting process, and absentee voting is becoming an increasingly common practice in many places.

In fact, Oregon now holds all of its elections by mail and has done so since 1998. The State



**Interpreting Diagrams** Electronic voting is becoming increasingly common, replacing mechanical voting machines. Here, voters make their choices on a touchpad similar to that on an automated teller machine. **How are votes counted in an electronic voting system?**

held the first-ever all-mail primary election and the first-ever all-mail general election (including the presidential election) in 2000.

Vote-by-mail elections have stirred controversy, of course. Critics fear that the process threatens the principle of the secret ballot. They worry about fraud, especially the possibility that some voters may be subjected to undue pressures when they mark their ballots at home or any place other than within the security of a voting booth.

Supporters, on the other hand, say that vote-by-mail elections can be as fraud-proof as any other method of voting. They also cite this fact:





▲ This photo shows the mail-in ballot used by Oregon voters, who now vote by mail in all elections. **Critical Thinking** How can voting by mail help increase the number of votes cast in an election? **H-SS 12.6.4**

The mail-in process usually increases voter turnout in elections and, at the same time, reduces the costs of conducting them.

### Online Voting

Online voting—casting ballots via the Internet—has attracted considerable attention (and some support) in the past few years. Will e-voting become widespread—even commonplace, as some predict? Clearly, only time will tell.

Online voting is not an entirely new phenomenon. The first e-vote was cast in November

1997. In that year, election officials in Harris County, Texas, permitted astronaut David Wolf to vote in Houston’s city election by e-mail from the space station *Mir*.

The first public elections in which some votes were cast by computer were held in 2000. In Arizona, some of the ballots cast in the Democratic Party’s presidential primary in March were cast online. And, for the general election in November, the Defense Department ran a very limited project in which 84 members of the military stationed abroad voted. As noted earlier, however, DOD abandoned plans for a much larger project in 2004. Some 46,000 voters (28 percent of the total turnout) did vote by computer in the Democratic Party’s presidential caucuses in Michigan in February of 2004.

A number of public officials in several States and a number of dot.com companies promote online voting. These supporters claim that it will make participation much more convenient, increase voter turnout, and reduce the costs of conducting elections.

Many skeptics believe that the electronic infrastructure is not ready for e-voting. Some fear digital disaster: jammed phone lines, blocked access, hackers, viruses, denials of service attacks, fraudulent vote counts, and violations of voter secrecy. Critics also point out that because not everyone can afford home computers, online voting could undermine basic American principles of equality.

## Section 2 Assessment

### Key Terms and Main Ideas

1. What is the purpose of **absentee voting** laws?
2. How can the **coattail effect** influence election results?
3. What factor determines the location of each voter’s **polling place**?
4. (a) What is a **ballot**? (b) What different forms does it take in the United States?

### Critical Thinking

5. **Predicting Consequences** Consider elections held in your school for class president and student council. How might the absence of secret ballots affect these elections?



### Standards Monitoring Online

For: Self-quiz with vocabulary practice  
Web Code: mqa-2072

6. **Expressing Problems Clearly** (a) What are the advantages and disadvantages of voting by mail and voting online? (b) Do you support either of these voting methods? Explain your answer.



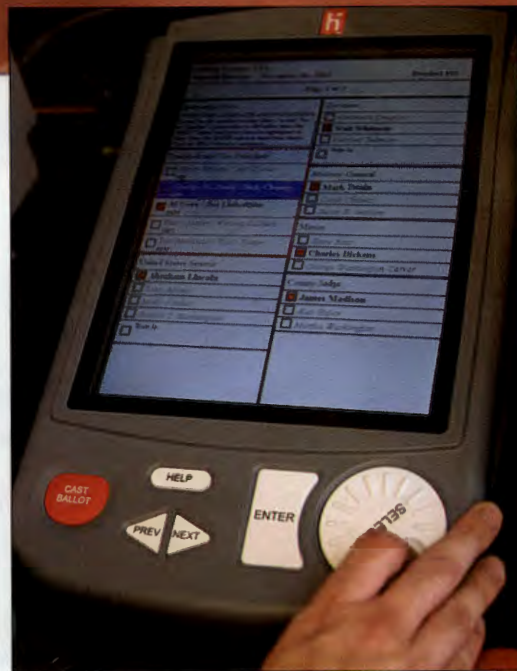
For: An activity on elections  
Web Code: mqd-2072



# Face the Issues

## Electronic Voting

**Background** *The Help America Vote Act, passed by Congress in 2002, effectively prohibits the use of lever-operated voting machines or punch-card voting devices in any primary or general election. In response to the law, most States have now either adopted direct response electronic voting machines (DREs) or are in the process of doing so. DREs work much like ATMs. Voters make their choices by pushing buttons or touching a screen, and their votes then are recorded electronically. The adoption of these electronic voting systems has sparked controversy.*



A voting terminal



Analysis Skills CS2, HI1

### A Major Improvement

These computerized voting systems are easy to use. Among their several advantages, DREs make it impossible for a voter to make more than one choice in a given race. Thus, they reduce the number of spoiled ballots in an election—that is, the number of ballots that cannot be counted because of some voter-made error.

Unlike other voting systems, DREs can be made fully accessible to disabled persons, including those who are visually impaired. This means that, for many of those voters, they can cast ballots that are truly cast in secret. DREs also have the capacity to provide ballots in an unlimited number of languages, and so promote voter turnout among language minorities.

Finally, several studies show that, due to voter error, the ballots cast by minority voters are less likely to be counted where paper ballots are used. E-voting virtually eliminates that problem.

### Beware of Electronic Voting

Many computer scientists see a number of flaws in the DREs currently available. Several of them are most concerned about source code, the language of the software. It is altogether possible, they say, that those who program a system, or hackers who gain access to it, can manipulate the outcome of an election.

Many also worry about the transmission of voter totals to central locations. Those results are not usually sent via the Internet. They may be transmitted by a direct modem connection, however, and intercepted by a hacker.

E-voting systems should provide a “paper trail,” but most DREs now in use do not. They should be required to produce paper audit trails. These receipts, printed records of how ballots were marked, are critical to check for accuracy or tampering and provide a record when recounts are necessary. Most DREs do not yet produce these receipts. We require a receipt when we use a bank machine. Why not when we cast a vote?

### Exploring the Issues

1. Why are people concerned about electronic voting?
2. List two advantages and two disadvantages of electronic voting. Which factors are more important to you, and why?

For more information on trends in voting, view “Electronic Voting.”





## Section Preview

### OBJECTIVES

1. **Explain** the issues raised by campaign spending.
2. **Describe** the various sources of funding for campaign spending.
3. **Examine** federal laws that regulate campaign finance.
4. **Outline** the role of the Federal Election Commission in enforcing campaign finance laws.
5. **Describe** hard money and soft money.

### WHY IT MATTERS

Money is an indispensable campaign resource. Yet money also poses a variety of problems in the election process. That's why the use of money is regulated in today's elections.

### POLITICAL DICTIONARY

- ★ **political action committee (PAC)**
- ★ **subsidy**
- ★ **soft money**
- ★ **hard money**



▲ Seal of the Federal Election Commission, which administers federal law dealing with campaign finance.

**R**unning for public office costs money, and often a lot of it. That fact creates some difficult problems in American politics. It leaves open the possibility that candidates will try to buy their way into public office. It also makes it possible for special interests to try to buy favors from those who are in office.

Clearly, government by the people must be protected from these dangers. But how?

Parties and candidates must have money. Without it, they cannot campaign or do any of the many things they must do to win elections.

In short, dollars are an absolutely necessary campaign resource. Yet, the getting and spending of campaign funds can corrupt the entire political process.

## Campaign Spending

No one really knows how much money is spent on elections in the United States. Reliable estimates of total spending in recent presidential election years—including nominations and elections at all levels—can be seen in the table on the next page.

The presidential election eats up by far the largest share of campaign dollars. For 2004, total spending for all of the major and minor

party presidential efforts—for primaries, conventions, campaigns, for everything—reached a mind-boggling \$2 billion.

The vast sums spent on congressional campaigns also continue to climb, election after election. Spending in all the Senate and House races around the country totaled a stupendous amount, more than one billion dollars in 2004. Spending will almost certainly exceed even that huge sum in 2006.

Radio and television time, professional campaign managers and consultants, newspaper advertisements, pamphlets, buttons, posters and bumper stickers, office rent, polls, data processing, mass mailings, Web sites, travel—these and a host of other items make up the huge sums spent in campaigns. Television ads are far and away the largest item in most campaign budgets today, even at the local level. As Will Rogers put it years ago, “You have to be loaded just to get beat.”

The total amount spent in particular races varies widely, of course. How much depends on several things: the office involved, the candidate and whether he or she is the incumbent, the opposition, and, not least, the availability of campaign funds.

## Sources of Funding

Parties and their candidates draw their money from two basic sources: private contributors and the public treasury.



## Private and Public Sources

Private givers have always been the major source of campaign funds in American politics, and they come in various shapes and sizes:

1. Small contributors—those who give \$5 or \$10 or so, and only occasionally. Only about 10 percent of people of voting age ever make campaign contributions; so parties and candidates must look to other places for much of their funding.

2. Wealthy individuals and families—the “fat cats,” who can make large donations and find it in their best interest to make them.

3. Candidates—both incumbents and challengers, their families, and, importantly, people who hold and want to keep appointive public offices. Ross Perot holds the all-time record in this category. He spent some \$65 million of his own money on his independent bid for the presidency in 1992.

4. Various nonparty groups—especially **political action committees (PACs)**. Political action committees are the political arms of special-interest and other organizations with a stake in electoral politics.

5. Temporary organizations—groups formed for the immediate purposes of a campaign, including fund-raising. Hundreds of these short-lived units spring up every two years, and at every level in American politics.

Then, too, parties and their candidates often hold fund-raisers of various sorts. The most common are \$100-, \$500-, and \$1,000-a-plate luncheons, dinners, picnics, receptions, and similar gatherings. Some of these events now reach the \$100,000-or-more level in presidential campaigns. Direct mail requests, telethons, and Internet solicitations are also among the oft-used tools of those who raise campaign money.

Public funds—subsidies from the federal and some State treasuries—are now another prime source of campaign money. A **subsidy** is a grant of money, usually from a government. Subsidies have so far been most important at the presidential level, as you will see shortly.<sup>13</sup>

## Why People Give

Campaign donations are a form of political participation. Those who make them do so for a number of reasons. Many small donors give simply because they believe in a party or in a

## Total Campaign Spending, 1960–2004

Year	Estimated spending	Voter turnout*	Spending per voter
1960	\$175 million	68.8 million	\$2.54
1964	\$200 million	70.6 million	\$2.83
1968	\$300 million	73.2 million	\$4.10
1972	\$425 million	77.7 million	\$5.47
1976	\$540 million	81.6 million	\$6.62
1980	\$1.2 billion	86.6 million	\$13.87
1984	\$1.8 billion	92.7 million	\$19.42
1988	\$2.7 billion	91.6 million	\$29.48
1992	\$3.2 billion	104.4 million	\$30.65
1996	\$4.0 billion	96.5 million	\$41.45
2000	\$5.1 billion	105.4 million	\$48.39
2004	\$6.0 billion	120.2 million	\$49.92

\*Presidential elections

SOURCES: Federal Election Commission; Herbert E. Alexander, *Financing Politics*



**Interpreting Tables** Total campaign spending has risen dramatically in recent elections. **What factors may account for this rise? H-SS 12.6.3**

candidate. Many of those who give, however, want something in return. They want access to government, and hope to get it by helping their “friends” win elections. And, notice, some contributors give to both sides in a contest: Heads they win and tails they still win.

Some big donors want appointments to public office, and others want to keep the ones they have. Some long for social recognition. For them, dinner at the White House, meeting with a Cabinet official, or knowing the governor on a first-name basis may be enough. Organized labor, business, professional, and various other groups have particular policy aims. They want certain laws passed, changed, or repealed, or certain administrative actions taken.

## Regulating Campaign Finance

Congress first began to regulate the use of money in federal elections in 1907. In that year, it became unlawful for any corporation or national bank to make “a money contribution in

<sup>13</sup>Public funds for presidential campaigns come from the federal treasury. Several States now also have some form of public financing for parties and/or candidates at the State and even the local level.



# Voices on Government

**Senator Maria Cantwell** (D., Washington) was elected to the United States Senate in 2000 after a campaign in which she refused to accept contributions from special interests. Later, as the Senate debated campaign finance reform legislation, she had this to say:

*“The only way we have to truly level the playing field, both between candidates and parties of opposing ideologies, and more importantly, between new candidates and incumbents, is to commit the resources to the process of getting people elected. Not until we create a campaign system with a shorter and more intensive campaign period—something I think the public would truly applaud—funded with finite and equal resources available to all candidates, will we be able to really listen carefully to what the people want.”*



## Evaluating the Quotation

**What advantages and disadvantages are there—for both voters and candidates—of “a shorter and more intensive campaign period . . . funded with finite and equal resources available to all candidates”?**

any election” to candidates for federal office. Since then, Congress has passed several laws to regulate the use of money in presidential and congressional campaigns. Today, these regulations are found in four detailed laws: the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) of 1971, the FECA Amendments of 1974 and of 1976, and the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002.

The earliest federal laws were loosely drawn, not often obeyed, and almost never enforced. The 1971 law replaced them. The 1974 law was the major legislative response to the Watergate scandal of the Nixon years. The 1976 law was passed in response to a landmark Supreme Court decision, *Buckley v. Valeo*, in 1976. The 2002 law attempted to close the “soft-money” loophole in the 1974 and 1976 statutes; it was upheld by the High Court in *McConnell v. FEC* in 2003.

<sup>14</sup>State funding laws are summarized in *The Book of the States*, an annual publication of the Council of State Governments.

Congress does not have the power to regulate the use of money in State and local elections. Every State now regulates at least some aspects of campaign finance, however—some of them more effectively than others.<sup>14</sup>

## The Federal Election Commission

The Federal Election Commission (FEC) administers all federal law dealing with campaign finance. Set up by Congress in 1974, the FEC is an independent agency in the executive branch. Its six members are appointed by the President, with Senate confirmation.

Federal campaign finance laws are both strongly worded and closely detailed. But they are not very well enforced. In large part this is because the FEC has been both underfunded and understaffed. That is to say, members of Congress—who, remember, raise and spend campaign money—have made it practically impossible for the FEC to do an effective job. In short, the FEC finds itself in a situation much like that of the chickens who must guard the fox house.

The laws that the FEC is supposed to enforce cover four broad areas. They (1) require the timely disclosure of campaign finance data, (2) place limits on campaign contributions, (3) place limits on campaign expenditures, and (4) provide public funding for several parts of the presidential election process.

## Disclosure Requirements

Congress first required the reporting of certain campaign finance information in 1910. Today, the disclosure requirements are intended to spotlight the place of money in federal campaigns. Those requirements are so detailed that most candidates for federal office now include at least one certified public accountant in their campaign organization.

No individual or group can make a contribution in the name of another. Cash gifts of more than \$100 are prohibited. So, too, are contributions from any foreign source.

All contributions to a candidate for federal office must be made through a single campaign committee. Only that committee can spend that candidate’s campaign money. All contributions and spending must be closely accounted for by that one committee. Any contribution or



loan of more than \$200 must be identified by source and by date. Any spending over \$200 must also be identified by the name of the person or firm to whom payment was made, by date, and by purpose.

Any contribution of more than \$5,000 must be reported to the FEC no later than 48 hours after it is received. So, too, must any sum of \$1,000 or more that is received in the last 20 days of a campaign.

### Limits on Contributions

Congress first began to regulate campaign contributions in 1907, when it outlawed donations by corporations and national banks. A similar ban was first applied to labor unions in 1943. Individual contributions became subject to regulation in 1939.

Today, no person can give more than \$2,100 to any federal candidate in a primary election, and no more than \$2,100 to any federal candidate's general election campaign. Also, no person can give more than \$5,000 in any year to a political action committee, or \$26,700 to a national party committee. The total of any person's contributions to federal candidates and committees now must be limited to no more than \$101,400 in an election cycle (the two years from one general election to the next one).

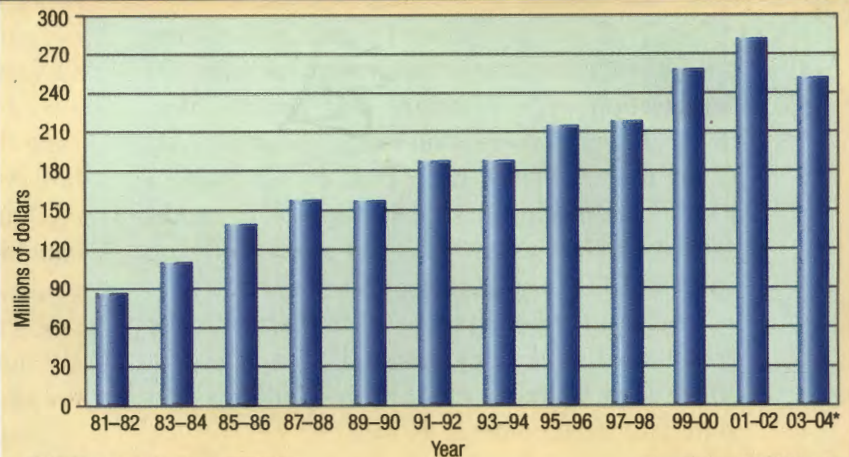
Those limits may seem generous; in fact, they are very tight. Before limits were imposed in 1974, many wealthy individuals gave far larger amounts. In 1972, for example, W. Clement Stone, a Chicago insurance executive, contributed more than \$2 million to President Richard Nixon's reelection campaign.

### PAC Contributions

Neither corporations nor labor unions can contribute to any candidate running for a federal office. Their political action committees, however, can and do.

Political action committees (PACs) seek to affect the making of public policy and, especially, the outcome of elections in the United States. More than 4,000 PACs are active today, and they are of two distinct types:

## PAC Contributions to Congressional Candidates



SOURCE: Federal Election Commission

\*through June 30, 2004 only



**Interpreting Graphs** Political action committees (PACs) have become a major source of campaign money. *How do you think the growth of PACs has affected political campaigns since the 1980s?*

- Most PACs are the political arms of special interest groups—and especially of business associations, labor unions, and professional organizations. These groups are known as “segregated fund committees.” They can raise funds *only* from their members—from the employees and stockholders of a corporation, from the members of a labor union, and so on. They *cannot* seek contributions from the general public. Each of these PACs is a part of its parent organization.

Leading examples of these groups include BIPAC (the Business-Industry Political Action Committee) and COPE (the AFL-CIO’s Committee on Political Education).

- A few hundred PACs are “unconnected committees.” Each of them was established as an independent entity, not as a unit in some larger organization. Many are ideologically based. These PACs can raise money from the public at large. One major example is EMILY’s List, which recruits and funds pro-choice women as Democratic candidates. (The group takes its name from this political maxim: Early Money Is Like Yeast, it makes the dough rise.)

PACs fill their war chests with contributions from the members of the PAC’s parent organization or with the dollars they raise from the public. PACs “bundle” the money they gather into a single large fund. Then they distribute that



money to those candidates who (1) are sympathetic to the PAC's policy goals, and (2) have a reasonable chance of winning their races.

No PAC can give more than \$5,000 to any one federal candidate in an election, or \$10,000 per election cycle (primary and general election). However, there is no overall limit on PAC giving to candidates. Each PAC can give up to \$5,000 per election to each of as many candidates as it chooses. A PAC may also contribute up to \$15,000 a year to a political party.

PACs put more than \$600 million into the presidential and congressional campaigns in 2004. They funneled untold other millions into State and local contests as well.

### Limits on Expenditures

Congress first began to limit federal campaign spending in 1925. Most of the limits now on the books apply only to presidential (not congressional) elections. This fact is due mostly to the Supreme Court's decision in *Buckley v. Valeo*, 1976.

In *Buckley*, the High Court struck down several spending limits set by the FECA Amendments of 1974. It held each of those restrictions to be contrary to the 1st Amendment's guarantees of freedom of expression. In effect, said the Court, in politics "money is speech."

The most important of the provisions the Court threw out (1) limited campaign expenditures by candidates running for seats in the House or Senate, (2) limited how much of their own money candidates could put into their own campaigns, and (3) said that no person or group could spend more than \$1,000 on behalf of any federal candidate without that candidate's permission.

The Court did recognize one exception to the ban on spending limits. It held that the money spent by those presidential contenders who accept FEC subsidies *can* be regulated. Candidates do not have to take the FEC money; but if they do they must accept spending limits as part of the deal.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup>To this point, only five major party aspirants (three Republicans and two Democrats) have not taken the public money—all five in the pre-convention period and two of them twice. The three Republicans: John Connally in 1980, Steve Forbes in 1996 and 2000, and George W. Bush in 2000 and 2004. The Democrats: Howard Dean and John Kerry in 2004. (Mr. Bush did accept FEC funding for his general election campaigns in 2000 and 2004, as did Mr. Kerry in 2004.)

For 2004, those major party contenders who accepted the federal funds could spend no more than \$37.3 million in the pre-convention period. (President Bush, who did not take the FEC money for that period, was on track to spend more than five times that amount by the time the GOP convention met in New York in late August.)

After the conventions, in the general election campaign, each of the major party nominees could spend no more than \$74.6 million. And neither major party's national committee could lay out more than \$15 million for its presidential campaign efforts.

Minor party candidates can also qualify for FEC money. Only a few have been able to do so, however—most recently, the Reform Party's nominee, Pat Buchanan in 2000.

### Public Funding of Presidential Campaigns

Congress first began to provide for the public funding of presidential campaigns in the Revenue Act of 1971. It broadened sections of that law in 1974 and again in 1976.

The 1971 law set up the Presidential Election Campaign Fund. Every person who files a federal income tax return can "check off" (assign) three dollars of his or her tax payment (six dollars on a joint return) to the fund. The monies in the fund are used every four years to finance (1) pre-convention campaigns, (2) national conventions, and (3) presidential election campaigns. The FEC administers the public subsidy process.

1. *Pre-convention Campaigns.* Presidential primary and caucus campaigns are supported by the private contributions a candidate raises plus the public money he or she receives from the FEC. To be eligible for public funds, a contender must raise at least \$100,000 in contributions from individuals (not organizations). That amount must be gathered in \$5,000 lots in each of at least 20 States, with each of those lots built from individual donations of not more than \$250. This convoluted requirement is meant to discourage frivolous candidates.

For each presidential hopeful who passes this test, the FEC will match the first \$250 of each individual's donation to that candidate, up to a total of half of the overall limit on primary spending. So, in 2004, the FEC could give a



contender as much as \$18.65 million, because the ceiling was \$37.3 million. The FEC does not match contributions from PACs or other political organizations.

For 2004, all the major party presidential hopefuls combined spent nearly \$250 million on their preconvention campaigns. This figure included some \$28.5 million in matching funds from the FEC.

2. *National Conventions.* If a major party applies for the money, it automatically receives a grant to help pay for its national convention. The FEC paid the Republicans and the Democrats \$14.6 million each for that purpose in 2004.

3. *Presidential Election Campaigns.* Every major party nominee automatically qualifies for a public subsidy to cover the costs of the general election campaign. For the 2004 election, that subsidy amounted to \$74.6 million. A candidate can refuse that money, of course. Should that ever happen, the candidate would be free to raise however much he or she could from private sources.

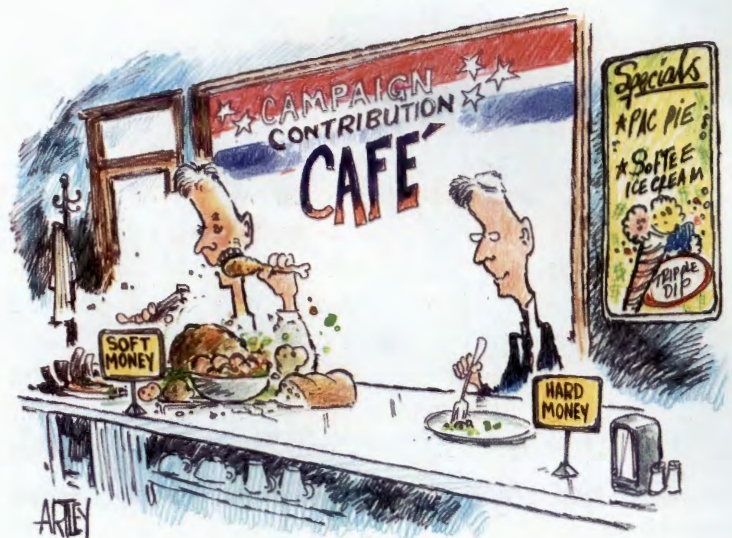
So far (from 1976 through 2004), the nominees of both major parties have taken the public money each time. Because they did so, each automatically (1) could spend no more than the amount of the subsidy, and (2) could not accept campaign funds from any other source.

A minor party candidate can also qualify for public funding, but not automatically. To be eligible, the minor party must either (1) have won at least five percent of the popular vote in the last presidential election, or (2) win at least that much of the total vote in the current election.

In the latter case, the public money is received *after* the election and so could not possibly help the candidate in that election. (Remember, many provisions of both federal and State election law are purposely drawn to discourage minor party and independent efforts and thus help strengthen the two-party system.)

Except for Ross Perot in 1996, few minor party candidates have come even remotely close to winning five percent of the popular vote in any election since the subsidy arrangement was put in place. Over that period (1976 through 2004), however, two independent candidates did exceed the five-percent threshold.

John Anderson received 6.7 percent of the popular vote in 1980. He therefore received



**Interpreting Political Cartoons** (a) Explain the difference between “hard” and “soft” money. (b) How does the cartoon help make that difference clear? **H-SS 12.6.3**

\$4.2 million from the FEC after that election. Ross Perot won 19 percent of the vote in 1992. Thus, the FEC ruled that he was eligible to receive \$29.2 million from the Presidential Election Campaign Fund to finance his Reform Party candidacy in 1996. Perot won 8 percent of the popular vote in 1996, and so the Reform Party’s candidate, Pat Buchanan, qualified for the federal subsidy in 2000.

## Hard Money, Soft Money

Nearly 40 years ago, President Lyndon Johnson described the then-current body of federal campaign finance law as “more loophole than law.” Over recent years, we have come very close to the point where LBJ’s comment could be applied to federal election money statutes today—particularly because of soft money.

For over 30 years now, federal campaign finance laws have placed limits on **hard money**—that is, on money raised and spent to elect candidates for Congress and the White House. But, until 2002, those laws did *not* limit **soft money**—funds given to party organizations for such “party-building activities” as candidate recruitment, voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives, and similar efforts.

Both major parties began to raise soft money (began to exploit the soft-money loophole) in





*"I may be awhile. I'm soliciting funds for my reelection campaign."*

**Interpreting Political Cartoons** From what sources might this candidate solicit funds?

the 1980s, and they intensified those efforts in the 1990s. The Republican and Democratic National Committees and their House and Senate campaign committees gathered millions of unregulated dollars from wealthy individuals, labor unions, corporations, and other interest groups. Officially, those funds were raised for party-building purposes, but both parties found it easy to filter them into their presidential and congressional campaigns.

The torrent of money rushing through the soft-money loophole rose from about \$19 million in 1980 to more than \$260 million by 1996 and to some \$500 million in 2000. Look again at the figures on page 196 and at those in

the table on page 197. Those huge numbers, fueled in no small part by soft money, have convinced a great many people that the nation's campaign finance laws are in serious need of reform. As a step in that direction, Congress—after years of debate and delay—finally enacted the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (the BCRA) of 2002.

The new measure became law largely because of years of unremitting effort by its chief sponsors: Senators John McCain (R., Arizona) and Russ Feingold (D., Wisconsin) and Representatives Christopher Shays (R., Connecticut) and Martin Meehan (D., Massachusetts).

The BCRA's major provisions are aimed at the soft-money problem. They ban soft-money contributions to political parties. But the law does not say that other political groups cannot raise and spend those dollars. Almost immediately, a number of independent groups—groups with no formal ties to any party—emerged to do just that. In short, creative minds in both major parties found a way to skirt the ban on soft money. Some \$200 million poured through that loophole in 2004.

The most prominent of those groups in the last presidential election included America Coming Together, MoveOn.org, and the Media Fund; all three supported John Kerry and other Democrats. The Program for America Voters Fund was the most visible independent group backing President Bush and other Republicans.

## Section 3 Assessment

### Key Terms and Main Ideas

1. What are **political action committees (PACs)**?
2. (a) What is a **subsidy**? (b) At what level in the election process are campaign subsidies most important?
3. How did **soft money** create a loophole in federal election-finance law?
4. How do soft money and **hard money** differ?

### Critical Thinking

5. **Distinguishing Fact From Opinion** Explain why you agree or disagree with this statement: "Democracy would be best served if campaigns were entirely supported by the small contributions of millions of American voters."



### Standards Monitoring Online

For: Self-quiz with vocabulary practice  
Web Code: mqa-2073

6. **Drawing Conclusions** How might the electoral process be changed if there were no limits on campaign spending?



For: An activity on funding political campaigns  
Web Code: mqd-2073



## Can States Limit Campaign Contributions?

*Campaign finance laws attempt to prevent wealthy individuals and organizations from exercising undue influence in elections and on public officeholders. However, in Buckley v. Valeo, 1976, the Supreme Court struck down several limits on campaign contributions as violations of the 1st Amendment's guarantee of freedom of speech. Does that decision mean that States cannot limit campaign contributions?*



**Analysis Skills**  
HR4, HI3, HI4

### **Nixon v. Shrink Missouri Government PAC (2000)**

In 1994, Missouri passed a law limiting the amount of money that individuals and organizations could give to political candidates. The specific limits depended on the particular office and were changed periodically to reflect changes in the cost of living. The Shrink Missouri Government Political Action Committee and Zev David Fredman, a candidate for State office, filed suit against Jeremiah J. Nixon, the Missouri attorney general, charging that the contribution limits violated their 1st Amendment rights. Shrink Missouri stated that it would have given more money to Fredman if the law had not prevented it, and Fredman argued that he could not campaign effectively without larger contributions.

The federal district court upheld the law. It held that the law supported the government's aim of increasing citizens' trust in government by reducing public fears that wealthy campaign donors had too much influence over government. The court of appeals reversed that decision, finding in part that the State legislature had not proven that large campaign contributions had caused actual corruption. Nixon then sought review by the Supreme Court.

### **Arguments for Nixon**

1. The State has a legitimate interest in preventing corruption and the appearance of corruption that large campaign contributions can create.
2. The contribution limits imposed by Missouri were not unreasonably low. They did not prevent candidates from raising enough money to run effective campaigns.

3. Money is property; it is not speech. The "right" to contribute money is not entitled to the same high level of protection as is freedom of speech.

### **Arguments for Shrink Missouri**

1. Missouri did not present actual evidence showing that large campaign contributions were creating corruption or even the appearance of corruption. Without such evidence, the abstract concern about the effect of large contributions does not justify restricting citizens' right to contribute.
2. Limits on campaign contributions make it more difficult for outside candidates who do not have the support of the media and of established political interests to conduct effective campaigns.
3. Campaign contributions are entitled to strong 1st Amendment protection, not because they themselves are speech but because they enable donors to promote the speech of candidates who share their views.

### **Decide for Yourself**

1. Review the constitutional grounds on which each side based its arguments and the specific arguments each side presented.
2. Debate the opposing viewpoints presented in this case. Which viewpoint do you favor?
3. Predict the impact of the Court's decision on ways in which States may seek to regulate campaign financing in the future. (To read a summary of the Court's decision, turn to pages 799–806.)

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## Political Dictionary

**nomination** (p. 178), **general election** (p. 179), **caucus** (p. 180), **direct primary** (p. 182), **closed primary** (p. 182), **open primary** (p. 183), **blanket primary** (p. 183), **runoff primary** (p. 184), **nonpartisan election** (p. 184), **absentee voting** (p. 189), **coattail effect** (p. 190), **precinct** (p. 190), **polling place** (p. 190), **ballot** (p. 190), **political action committee (PAC)** (p. 197), **subsidy** (p. 197), **soft money** (p. 201), **hard money** (p. 202)

## Standards Review

**H-SS 12.2.4** Understand the obligations of civic-mindedness, including voting, being informed on civic issues, volunteering and performing public service, and serving in the military or alternative service.

**H-SS 12.3.1** Explain how civil society provides opportunities for individuals to associate for social, cultural, religious, economic, and political purposes.

**H-SS 12.6.1** Analyze the origin, development, and role of political parties, noting those occasional periods in which there was only one major party or were more than two major parties.

**H-SS 12.6.2** Discuss the history of the nomination process for presidential candidates and the increasing importance of primaries in general elections.

**H-SS 12.6.3** Evaluate the roles of polls, campaign advertising, and the controversies over campaign funding.

**H-SS 12.6.4** Describe the means that citizens use to participate in the political process (e.g., voting, campaigning, lobbying, filing a legal challenge, demonstrating, petitioning, picketing, running for political office).

## Practicing the Vocabulary

**Matching** Choose a term from the list above that best matches each description.

1. A group of like-minded people who meet to choose candidates for office
2. The political arm of a special-interest group
3. An election held within a political party at which the voters choose candidates who will appear on the ballot in an upcoming general election
4. The place where voters go to cast their ballots
5. The device by which voters register their choices in an election

**Fill in the Blank** Choose a term from the list above that best completes the sentence.

6. In a \_\_\_\_\_, voters must choose between the two top finishers in an earlier primary election.
7. Because of the \_\_\_\_\_, candidates can benefit from the popularity of another candidate on the ballot from their party.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ is given to State and local party organizations for "party-building activities."
9. One commonly heard criticism of the \_\_\_\_\_ is that it encourages "raiding."
10. Each \_\_\_\_\_ has one polling place.

## Reviewing Main Ideas

### Section 1

11. You have read that the nominating process has "a very real impact on the exercise of the right to vote." Explain this statement in your own words.
12. What are the five broad categories that describe the way in which nominations are made?
13. How has the nominating process in American politics changed over time?
14. At which level is the convention still a major nominating device in American politics?
15. Describe the differences between the open and the closed primary.

### Section 2

16. What is the overall purpose and importance of election law in the American political process?
17. To what extent are the States involved in regulating the electoral process?
18. (a) To what extent is the Federal Government involved in the regulation of elections? (b) Give at least three examples of federal laws that regulate elections.

19. (a) Describe the basic difference between the office-group ballot and the party-column ballot. (b) What are the advantages of each?

20. Why did Congress force the States to abandon the use of punch-card ballots?

### Section 3

21. Briefly describe the role and importance of money in the election process.
22. (a) Identify five types of private donors to political campaigns. (b) Why might these individuals and groups wish to contribute money to candidates?
23. Outline the limitations placed on individual and PAC contributions to federal candidates and political parties.
24. (a) How does a presidential contender qualify for public funding in the pre-convention period? (b) Has any aspirant ever declined public money in the pre-convention period? If so, who?
25. What was the major purpose of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002?



## Critical Thinking Skills

### Analysis Skills HR4, HI1

26. **Face the Issues** Research the success of electronic voting in the 2004 Presidential election. Does the experience of this election strengthen or weaken the argument for electronic voting?
27. **Drawing Conclusions** Use what you have read in this chapter to make an argument for or against the following statement: *In some circumstances, the nomination of candidates is a more meaningful step in the electoral process than is the general election period.*
28. **Expressing Problems Clearly** Which offices in your State, city, and county are now filled by popular vote? Do you think that any of those posts should be filled instead by appointment? If so, which one(s) and why? If not, why not?
29. **Identifying Alternatives** What are the different types of primaries that a State may decide to use? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each type?

## Analyzing Political Cartoons

Using your knowledge of American government and this cartoon, answer the questions below.



30. (a) Who are the characters in the cartoon? (b) Why are two of them covered in mud?
31. What can be the effect of a divisive primary on a political party?

## You Can Make a Difference

Create an unbiased information sheet on political candidates. Obtain a list of candidates in a forthcoming local or State election—for example, people running for the State legislature. Start with a brief biography of each candidate. Include the person's personal and political history, stands he or she has taken on issues, and other relevant information. Use the back files of local newspapers as well as the Internet, the library, and other sources. Write your findings as a voters' guide.

## Participation Activities

### Analysis Skills CS4, HR4

32. **Current Events Watch** Keep track of stories in the news about money spent on election campaigns and about campaign finance reform. Then use what you have learned to write an essay explaining why you would favor or oppose legislation that limits the amount of money candidates can spend on campaigns.
33. **Chart Activity** Create a chart or calendar for the current election cycle in your State. The calendar should list the date of the next primary and general election, candidate filing deadlines, voter registration deadlines, and any other important dates. (Since in most States the secretary of state administers the election laws, that office is a good source for election information.)
34. **It's Your Turn** Write an editorial in which you probe this comment by Mark Hanna: "There are two things that are important in politics. The first is money, and I can't remember what the second one is." Find out who Mark Hanna was and include this information in your editorial. Do you think that he was expressing a cynical view or, instead, was trying to emphasize a point? (**Writing an Editorial**)



## Standards Monitoring Online

For: Chapter 7 Self-Test Visit: [PHSchool.com](http://PHSchool.com)  
Web Code: mqa-2074

As a final review, take the Magruder's Chapter 7 Self-Test and receive immediate feedback on your answers. The test consists of 20 multiple-choice questions designed to test your understanding of the chapter content.