



For Immediate Release
May 13, 2004

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Doolittle: FEC Can't Fix McCain-Feingold ***Confusion Surrounding 527s Result of Excessive Regulation***

Washington, D.C. - House Republican Conference Secretary John T. Doolittle (R-Calif.) today commended the decision of the Federal Election Commission (FEC), which postponed any decision on government regulation of 527 groups.

"The confusion surrounding 527 groups is the result of the excessive regulation McCain-Feingold added to an already problematic campaign finance law," Doolittle said. "It is indeed sad when less accountable groups like 527s have more freedom to speak in political campaigns than fully-accountable candidates and political parties. Unfortunately, the reaction to today's FEC decision by so-called 'reformers' is likely to be another shrill call for further government regulation."

"It's hard to imagine that current law could be consistent with the First Amendment, which plainly states that, 'Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech,'" Doolittle continued. "Unfortunately, a bare majority of the United States Supreme Court did imagine it, and it's now up to Congress to right the wrongs that have been inflicted against political speech over the last 30 years. Today's campaign finance law will continue to wreak havoc until we reinstate an open, unregulated political process."

"I appreciate today's FEC decision, which applied a strict-constructionist approach to the law and rendered its decision in a fair and impartial manner," Doolittle said. "The ruling did not attempt to *make* law, as the petitioners had sought, but instead followed the law as it was written by Congress – however abysmal that law may be."

Doolittle sponsored legislation in the last three congresses that would have lifted all dollar limits on political contributions while requiring strict, 24-hour disclosure on the Internet of all campaign contributions. The Doolittle alternative would also eliminate taxpayer financing of campaigns.

U.S. Rep. John T. Doolittle has served in the House of Representatives since 1991. As Secretary of the House Republican Conference, he is an elected member of the House Republican Leadership. Doolittle represents California's 4th Congressional District and serves on the Appropriations Committee, Energy and Water and DC Appropriations Subcommittees, and the House Administration Committee.

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