

# United States Senate

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## SENATOR TSONGAS ANNOUNCES BILL ON CAMPAIGN FINANCING

Senator Paul Tsongas will introduce a bill next week which provides for public financing of Congressional elections. Tsongas made the announcement today during a speech on single issue politics delivered at the Seventh Annual Congressional Workshop of the League of Women Voters of the National Capitol area.

Tsongas stated, "It is critical that we control the funds spent on campaigns. The electoral process and the very function of Congress depends on it."

Tsongas also announced that he will co-sponsor a similar bill of Senator Edward Kennedy. The Kennedy Bill covers Senate general elections while the Tsongas bill regulates House and Senate, general and primary elections.

The central provisions of the Tsongas bill are:

- \*Candidates will receive matching public funds for private contributions of \$100 or less. This will cover up to 50 percent of mandated spending limits. Tsongas feels that this will encourage candidates to seek contributions from individuals rather than political action committees.

- \*Candidates will receive public funds only when following the spending limits provided by the act. In the House elections, candidates are limited to expenditures of \$150,000, half in the general and half in the primary; Senate candidates are limited to \$250,00 plus ten cents per eligible voter. In Senate primary elections, the limit is \$125,000 plus 5¢ per eligible voter. Candidates receiving public funds may only spend \$25,000 from personal funds.

- \*The spending limit of political action committees is reduced from \$5,000 to \$3,000.

"It has been estimated that in 1978, the average Senate seat cost more than \$1 million to win, compared to \$55,000 in 1974, the last non-presidential year. House races jumped from about \$72,000 in 1976 to more than \$100,000 in 1978, whether the candidate won or lost." Tsongas concluded, "My bill is an attempt to raise important issues that are necessary to turn around this excessive spending."

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