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Subject: FEC Comment
Date: 12/12/2007 05:34 PM

FEC Comment Submission (johnedwards.com)

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Comment: I am writing to comment on Draft Advisory Opinion 2007-31. I urge the Commission to reject Draft AO 2007-31, and permit individual credit card contributions made online through ActBlue to be matched under the Matching Fund Act.

I understand the FEC is deciding whether funds from small donor collection sites (such as ActBlue) will be available for matching funds . I would like to let you know that I do donate through these sites because they make donations easier than finding information about each individual candidate, writing and mailing a check, etc. I am able to make small donations (usually $20-$50) to several candidates at once. I realize that the rule is intended to encourage candidates to be responsive to ordinary individuals rather than large corporations, lobbyists or powerful PACs. Collection sites that simply pass along a donor’s contribution without doing wholesale fundraising actually help accomplish this goal.

The public financing system is designed to let campaigns match small dollar contributions from supporters. ActBlue helps facilitate those small dollar contributions. There's no reason contributions via ActBlue should not count for public financing purposes.

As a supporter of public financing, I believe the Commission should be removing obstacles for presidential candidates to participate in the matching funds system. The Commission should be embracing new technologies and grassroots financing of presidential campaigns. Draft AO 2007-31, on the other hand, would have the Commission erect new barriers to participation in matching funds.

I am very concerned about Draft Advisory Opinion 2007-31. Services like ActBlue are not PACs. They are not fronts for wealthy donors. They are just credit card processing organizations, allowing an easy way for small donors to make contributions to a variety of candidates.

I understand that individuals' contributions through a presidential candidateâ(s web site are readily matchable. Why should an online contribution through ActBlue be any less matchable? The draft advisory opinion barely addresses this question, much less provides an answer, and it should therefore be rejected by the Commission.

Please consider allowing donor collection sites that simply forward individual donations to be counted in matching fund calculations.

Thank you.