

Washington Insight: Corporate Lobbyist's Toolkit

Everything you need to know about political law

February 2016

Federal Election Commission Announces New Contribution Limits

Each year, as mandated by the Federal Election Campaign Act (“the Act”), the Federal Election Commission (“FEC”) must adjust both expenditure limitations and the lobbyist bundling disclosure threshold set forth in the Act to account for inflation reflected by changes in the consumer price index. The adjusted limits apply only to general elections held during 2016, including special elections. The effective date for the adjusted limits is January 1, 2016.

Coordinated Party Expenditure Limits for 2016. The expenditure limitation established by 52 U.S.C. 30116(d) (the limits on expenditures by national party committees, state party committees, or their subordinate committees in connection with the general election campaign of candidates for federal office) is increased each year by the percent difference between the price index, as certified to the FEC by the Secretary of Labor, for the 12 months preceding the beginning of the calendar year and the price index for the base period (calendar year 1974). *See* 52 U.S.C. 30116(c).

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1. Expenditure Limitation for President. The formula used to calculate the expenditure limitation for national party committees for calendar year 2016 is \$0.02 multiplied by the total voting age population (“VAP”) of the United States (247,773,709), multiplied by the price index, 4.80703. Based upon this formula, and rounded to the nearest \$100, the expenditure limitation for 2016 presidential nominees is \$23,821,100. *See* 52 U.S.C. 30116(d)(2) and 11 C.F.R. 109.32(a). The FEC did not publish an adjusted limit for national party committees for calendar year 2015.

2. Expenditures for House Races in States with More than One Congressional District. The formula used to calculate the 2016 expenditure limitation for both the national and state party committees for each general election held to fill a seat in the House in states with more than one congressional district multiplies a base figure of \$10,000 by the difference in the price index, 4.80703. When rounded to the nearest \$100, the expenditure limit for calendar year 2016 is \$48,100. *See* 52 U.S.C. 30116(c)(1)(B), (d)(3)(B); 11 C.F.R. 109.32(b), 110.17.

3. Expenditures for House Races in States with Only One Congressional District. The formula used to calculate the 2016 expenditure limitation for both the national and state party committees for each general election held to

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fill a seat in the House in states with only one congressional district is the greater of: the base figure (\$20,000) multiplied by the difference in the price index, 4.80703, which totals \$96,100; or \$0.02 multiplied by the VAP of the state (published annually in the *Federal Register* by the U.S. Department of Commerce), multiplied by 4.80703. When rounded to the nearest \$100, the expenditure limit for calendar year 2016 is \$96,100. *See* 52 U.S.C. 30116(c)(1)(B), (d)(3)(A); 11 C.F.R. 109.32(b), 110.17, 110.18.

4. Expenditures for Senate Races. The coordinated party expenditure limits for the general election for Senate races vary by state. The formula used to calculate the general election expenditure limitation for Senate races considers both the price index and the VAP of the state. *See* 52 U.S.C. 30116(c)(1)(B), (d)(3)(A); 11 C.F.R. 109.32(b), 110.17, 110.18.

Lobbyist Bundling Disclosure Threshold for 2016. The Act requires certain political committees to disclose contributions bundled by lobbyists/registrants and lobbyist/registant political action committees once their contributions exceed a specified threshold amount. *See* 52 U.S.C. 30104(i)(1), (3)(A). The FEC must adjust this threshold amount annually as mandated by the Act. The formula used to calculate the threshold amount multiplies the \$15,000 statutory disclosure threshold by 1.17569, the difference between the price index for the 12 months preceding the beginning of the calendar year and the price index for the base period (calendar year 2006). When rounded to the nearest \$100, the lobbyist bundling disclosure threshold for calendar year 2016 is \$17,600, unchanged from 2015. *See* 52 U.S.C. 30104(i)(3), 30116(c)(1)(B); 11 C.F.R. 104.22(g).

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The Corporate Lobbyist's Toolkit provides information on developments in the area of federal and state elections, ethics and other areas that are important to corporate lobbyists and others who interact with federal and state government officials.

More information about King & Spalding's Political Law Practice may be found [here](#).

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	2016	2015
Presidential Candidates	\$23,821,100	
Senate Candidates	A range from \$96,100 to \$2,886,500 (depending on each state's VAP). <i>See Senate general election chart from FEC Notice 2016-01 below.</i>	A range from \$96,000 to \$2,847,100 (depending on each state's VAP). <i>See Senate general election chart from FEC Notice 2015-01 below.</i>
House Candidates in States with Only One Congressional District	\$96,100	\$96,000
House Candidates in States with More than One Congressional District	\$48,100	\$48,000

Additional information on the Senate candidate limits may be found [here](#).

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