



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Thursday, November 15, 2007

Chairman Feinstein Urges Senator Ensign to Withdraw Amendment and Open Door for Passage of Common-Sense Electronic Filing Bill

Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), Chairman of the Rules and Administration Committee, has sent a letter to Senator John Ensign (R-Nev.) requesting that he withdraw an amendment that is currently holding up passage of S. 223, legislation to require Senate campaign finance reports to be filed electronically.

Following is the text of Senator Feinstein's letter to Senator Ensign:

November 14, 2007

The Honorable John Ensign
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear John:

I am writing to ask for your assistance for S. 223, the "Senate Campaign Disclosure Parity Act," to be brought up for consideration and passed by the Senate unencumbered by any amendments at the earliest possible time.

S. 223 has the broad bipartisan support of 40 cosponsors, including 16 Republicans. If you withdraw your amendment, I believe that this bill could be quickly considered and passed in wrap-up.

Your proposed amendment is not germane to the underlying bill and has not been reviewed by the Rules and Administration Committee. I understand that the amendment would require outside groups, such as advocacy and charitable organizations, that file ethics complaints to disclose their donors.

While S. 223 has broad bipartisan support in the Senate, your amendment has triggered broad ideologically diverse public opposition as exemplified by a letter to the Majority and Minority Leaders dated November 9, 2007.

In that letter, a large group of conservative and liberal non-profit organizations wrote to express their belief that the amendment is obstructionist and retaliatory, and runs counter to donors' privacy, free speech, and association rights. In addition, they charge that the amendment would have an effect on existing tax laws. Clearly, these are issues that need to be addressed in a public forum.

I propose for your consideration that the Rules Committee hold a hearing at which you, representatives of the Ethics Committee and the Finance Committee, and other interested parties have the opportunity to testify on the subject of your amendment.

Please let me know if you are agreeable to this offer. I look forward to working with you on the proposed hearing and on final passage of S. 223.

With warm personal regards,

Dianne Feinstein
Chairman

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