

Campaign Gifts Favor Incumbents

By Morton Mintz

Washington Post Staff Writer

Campaign contributors are giving three times as much money to incumbents on Capitol Hill as to their challengers, compared with twice as much in 1972, Common Cause reported yesterday. And, said the so-called citizens' lobby, special-interest groups are giving 80 per cent of their contributions to incumbents, 14 percentage points more than two years ago.

The increased flow of money to incumbents is "very unhealthy" for the democratic process, partly because it reflects the ability of officeholders to do something for contributors, Fredric M. Wertheimer, legislative director of Common Cause, told a press conference.

He predicted that the situation will worsen. Because the new election law, effective next January, provides public financing for presidential contests, business, labor, professional and other special interests will have an extra \$50 million or so available for House and Senate candidates in 1976 races, he said.

Wertheimer also accused Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) and Minority Leader Hugh Scott (R-Pa.) of trying to make "political plums" of the two Senate seats on the federal election commission, the enforcement body that is to be created under the new law.

Mansfield's choice is a life-long friend from Montana, Joseph F. Meglen. Scott's is the president of the Council of Republican Women in Pennsylvania, Joan D. Aikens. If confirmed by the Senate, each will be paid \$38,000 a year.

Wertheimer released a study for the year ended Sept. 1 showing that congressional candidates in the Nov. 5 election had raised \$40 million. Incumbents got \$24 million, their challengers \$8 million, and candidates in races not involving incumbents another \$8 million.

The Watergate scandal has

had "dramatically" adverse effects on Republican fund-raising, with GOP candidates having obtained only 42 per cent of the total by Sept. 1. In 1972, they got 54 per cent between April 7, the effective date of

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the current disclosure law, and Dec. 31. The total contributed of all House and Senate candidates in that period was \$70 million — substantially more than is expected to be contributed in 1974.

Yet, the study disclosed, GOP incumbents in the Senate have raised three times as much money as Democratic challengers. Republicans in the House have raised twice as much.

At the same time, non-incumbent Republicans have raised an average of one-fourth as much as their Democratic opponents. And in open races not involving incumbents, Democrats who in 1972 raised about as much as Republicans are this year substantially outpulling the GOP.

The study showed these highlights of the congressional campaign financing situation as of eight weeks before the general elections:

- Special interest groups had \$14 million left in the till after giving Democrats \$3.9 million and Republicans \$1.6 million (exclusive of \$1.1 million given to state and local candidates). Incumbents got \$3.7 million, their challengers \$900,000, and candidates in open races \$800,000.

- Incumbents were favored by business groups 15 to 1, by health groups 11 to 1, and by labor groups better than 3 to 1. Agricultural interests favored incumbents by 32 to 1, but have given only \$129,000 — a tiny fraction of their available cash.

- Demonstrating their preference for politicians who already yield power—and for Democrats, particularly, who are non-Watergate-tainted—special interest groups gave GOP incumbents in the House more than \$1 million, and Republicans opposing Democratic incumbents only \$66,000. The groups gave incumbent House Democrats more than \$1.5 million, and Democrats challenging GOP incumbents \$600,000.

- Individual contributors of \$500 or more gave Democrats \$4.7 million, almost 50 per cent more than the \$3.1 million they gave Republicans. Of the \$7.8 million total, \$3.8 million went to incumbents, \$1.9 million to challengers and \$2.1



FREDRIC A. WERTHEIMER ... outlines donations

million to candidates in open races.

- In what Wertheimer termed a "really remarkable" finding, the 25 persons who each gave at least \$15,000—for a total of nearly \$600,000—favored Democrats over Republicans almost 5 to 1.

The leading contributors (counting husband and wife as a single giver): Steven Kovack, Columbus, Ohio, \$54,585 to John Glenn for a successful primary race against Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D-Ohio); Alva T. Bonda, Bratenahl, Ohio, \$51,000 to Metzenbaum; Dr. Frank Forsyth of Winston-Salem, \$30,000 to Nick Galifianakis for an unsuccessful bid for the Democratic Senate nomination in North Carolina, and \$12,000 to House candidate Stephen Neal (D).

The leading Senate fund-raisers were Sens. Alan Cranston (D-Calif.), \$890,898; George McGovern (D-S.D.), \$875,649; John Glenn, \$803,661, and Sen. Richard Schweiker (R-Pa.), \$614,440.

The leaders in the House: Rep. Sam Steiger (R-Ariz.), \$228,543; James Scheuer (D-N.Y.), \$204,521, and Robert Kreuger (D-Tex.), \$200,318, both non-incumbents; Rep. J. J. Pickle (D-Tex.), \$189,950; Rep. Spark M. Matsunaga (D-Hawaii), \$172,131; Abner J. Mikya, \$169,157, and Rep. Joel T. Broyhill (R-Va.), \$159,202.

In a House race, Wertheimer said \$10,000 is comparable to \$100,000 in a presidential contest.