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Key House Member Joins Move For G.A.O. to Pay Vote Subsidy

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(Special to The New York Times)

WASHINGTON, Feb. 5—Rep-
resentative Wayne L. Hays,
chief Congressional critic of the
Federal Election Commission,
today joined the bipartisan ef-
fort to transfer temporarily to
the General Accounting Office
the commission's power to au-
thorize payment of political
subsidies.

The Ohio Democrat told a
news conference that he was
introducing a measure identical
with that sponsored earlier in
the week by Senators Edward
M. Kennedy, Democrat of Mas-
sachusetts, and Hugh Scott, Re-
publican of Pennsylvania.

The Election Commission will
lose its principal functions, in-
cluding subsidy authorization,
on March 1 unless Congress re-
constitutes its membership to
meet objections raised by the
Supreme Court last week.
There now appears to be vir-
tually no chance Congress will
meet that deadline.

Under the plan endorsed by
Mr. Hays, primary candidates
would continue to receive
matching funds for which they
are eligible, and the two major
parties would receive install-
ments on the \$2 million Federal
subsidy for each of their con-
ventions.

Hays 'Not Playing Games'

Mr. Hays said that he had
not decided on what kind of
broader campaign law reform
he would back during March
and April. He has agreed to a
temporary transfer of the subsi-
dy power, he added, "to show
I was not playing games and
was acting in good faith to get
something in place by April
30."

The Ohioan said that he be-
lieved Robert S. Strauss, Demo-
cratic National Chairman, was
in favor of transferring the sub-
sidy power to G.A.O.

"I get along with Bob

Strauss," he said. "We're on the
same side. I'm going to get his
\$2 million for him."

Mr. Hays insisted that his op-
position to a commission with
regulatory power was personal,
and that the House Administra-
tion Committee, which he
heads, and the full House might
well disagree with him.

To reconstitute the commis-
sion and restore all its powers,
Congress would have to pass
a bill giving President Ford au-
thority to appoint all its six
members, instead of only two
as the law now reads.

Fred Wertheimer, vice pres-
ident of Common Cause, said
that the Hays bill "takes away
the one lever that forces the
House of Representatives to
deal with the Election Commis-
sion" by insuring that the sub-
sidies would be continued after
the court-imposed expiration
date for the commission.