**Put Your Money where Your Candidate Is**

Read [Campaign Reform: Overview](http://www.publicagenda.org/issues/overview.cfm?issue_type=campaign_finance) at publicagenda.org.  After reading the article, take some time to browse through the web site.

Senator Maria Cantwell (D., Washington) was elected to the United States Senate in 2000 after a campaign in which she refused to accept contributions from special interests.

Maria Cantwell

Later as the Senate debated campaign finance reform legislation, she had this to say:

"The only way we have to truly level the playing field, both between candidates and parties of opposing ideologies, and more importantly, between new candidates and incumbents, is to commit the resources to the process of getting people elected.  Not until we create a campaign system with a shorter and more intensive campaign period - something I think the public would truly applaud - funded with finite and equal resources available to all candidates, will we be able to really listen carefully to what the people want."

* What are the advantages and disadvantages - for both voters and candidates - of "a shorter and more intensive campaign period... funded with finite and equal resources available to all candidates"?
* How do soft money and hard money differ?  How did soft money create a loophole in federal election-finance law?
* How might the electoral process change if there were no limits on campaign spending?
* What is the status of the campaign finance reform initiative today?

**Where is campaign money spent?**  
If you are curios about where all of the money raised for campaigns is spent you can watch this video from National Public Radio.  You will see the United States manipulated in different ways when it comes to Presidential campaigns.