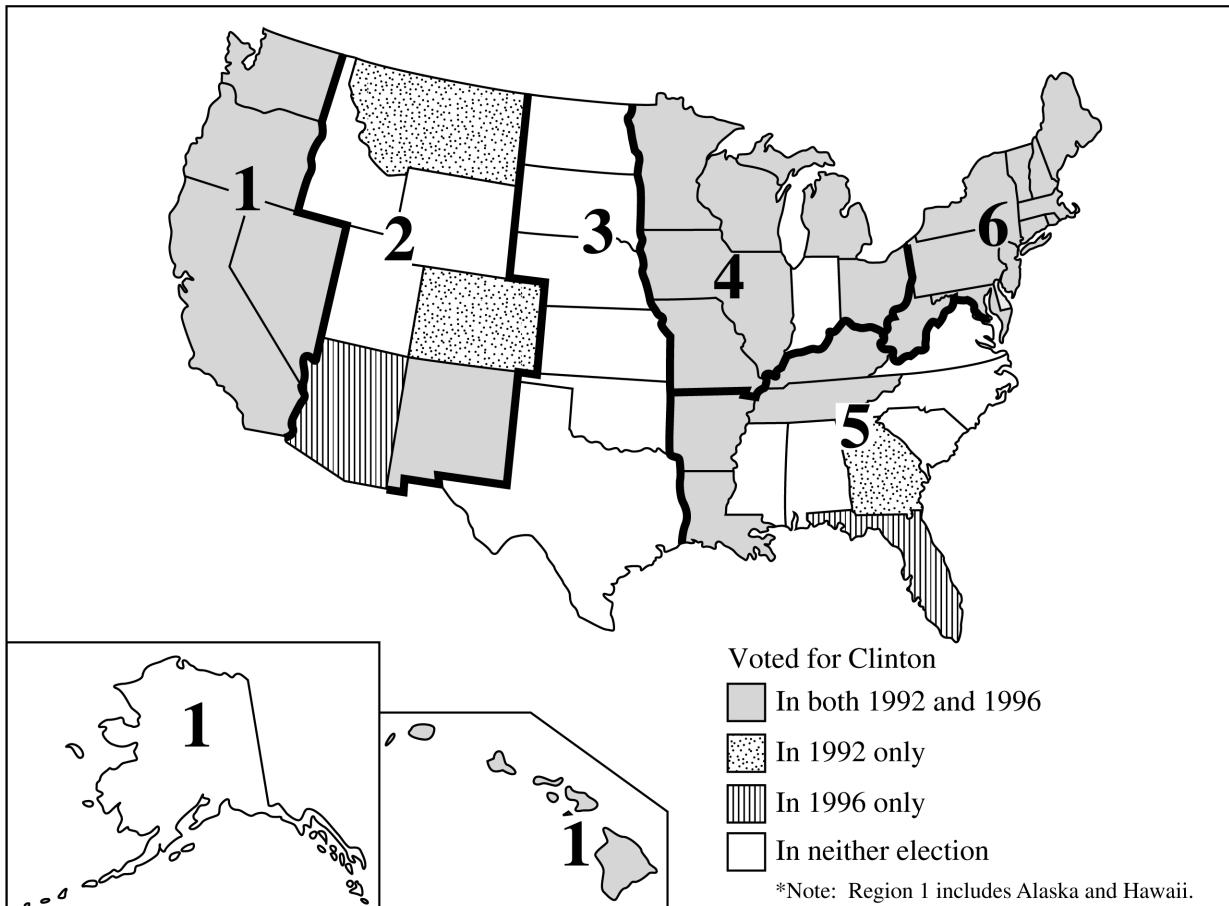


2000 AP® UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS BY STATE, 1992 AND 1996



4. The three obstacles listed below have made it difficult for Congress to enact significant campaign finance reform.

- *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976)
- Soft money
- Incumbency

Select two of the obstacles. For each obstacle, provide both of the following.

- (a) A brief description of the obstacle
- (b) An explanation of how the obstacle has made it difficult for Congress to enact significant campaign finance reform

END OF EXAMINATION

2000 AP Comparative Government & Politics
Question 4 Scoring Guidelines

6 POINTS TOTAL

Obstacle 1 One point for description
 One point for elaborating the obstacle
 One point for explicit linkage to how/why obstacle restricts enactment of finance reform
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS FOR OBSTACLE 1: **Three (3)**

Obstacle 2 One point for description
 One point for elaborating the obstacle
 One point for explicit linkage to how/why obstacle restricts enactment of finance reform
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS FOR OBSTACLE 2: **Three (3)**

Attempts to answer question but earns no points: scored as zero (**0**)
Blank or off-task: scored as a dash (-)

OBSTACLES PERMITTED:

• ***Buckley v. Valeo* (1976)**

Description: Supreme Court struck down certain campaign donation limits and spending limits as violation of free expression provisions of 1st Amendment

Explanation:

- Contributing to one's own campaign, contributing to parties for party building, and spending money independently of a campaign are forms of protected free expression.
- A constitutional amendment is required to limit free expression, not a more easily enacted statute.

• **Soft Money**

Description: unregulated donations to political parties for party activities/party building; usually spent in the states to aid candidates *indirectly* in various ways

Explanation:

- Both parties benefit from soft money, so partisan members of Congress and presidents have little incentive to regulate this resource; there is no critical policy-making mass for reform
- Interest groups are often the contributors of these funds, perceive benefits from their use, and have no incentive to urge office seekers or incumbents with whom they have a relationship to regulate these monies.

• **Incumbency**

Description: an office holder who is pursuing reelection

Explanation:

- Incumbents benefit most from existing campaign finance laws
- Incumbents have a high probability of re-election and thus attract more donations than challengers, which gives them a desirable advantage in re-election contests.
- Incumbents know the consequences of current policy, find them favorable, and realize that changes may create unanticipated negative consequences for themselves.

NOTES: (1) This discussion is necessarily set in the context of federal elections (presidency and Congress).
(2) One or both points may be earned for the explanation without earning the description point, although earning one such point will likely be unusual, and two points rare.
(3) Independent expenditures are NOT considered soft money