RESOLVED, That the American Bar Association urges that any changes to the current campaign finance system must be framed in a constitutionally sound manner and the need for government regulation must be balanced against First Amendment protections of political speech.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the American Bar Association urges that efforts must be taken to ensure there is full disclosure of money spent in federal elections; the perception of corruption is reduced; and voters are afforded a full opportunity to hear the views of candidates.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the American Bar Association supports the following principles regarding federal campaign finance legislation:

1) Campaign finance laws and the implementation of those laws should not discourage the participation of individuals, political parties and organized political groups in all aspects of the electoral process.

2) Campaign finance laws should be drafted and enforced in a manner that distinguishes between issue advocacy, which is protected by the First Amendment and should not be limited, and express advocacy which is also protected by the First Amendment but which the courts have held can be limited under certain circumstances. Issue advocacy should not serve as a mechanism for otherwise impermissible campaign contributions.

3) Current individual campaign contribution limits, imposed in 1974, should be adjusted for inflation and indexed hereafter.

4) Federal election activity should be conducted solely with money permitted to be raised and spent under federal law. Congress and the FEC should take further steps to ensure that money raised outside of federal law (i.e., “soft money”) is not used for federal election purposes.

5) All contributions to and expenditures by state and federal party committees should be disclosed publicly and electronically. Congress should require that the Federal Election Commission (FEC) provide a central clearinghouse with respect to data concerning both contribution and expenditure reports.

6) State legislatures should consider prohibiting or limiting the use of union and corporate general treasury funds for the election of candidates to office.

7) Congress should examine ways to reduce the costs to candidates of federal election campaigns without imposing spending limits.