

Chron

—

3-30-98

per Sean - we
should keep these
copies.

Debbie —

(campaign finance
reform)

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Kasane

March 30, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker:

The Congress has an obligation and an opportunity to strengthen our democracy by passing comprehensive campaign finance reform. Instead, the Congressional leadership is attempting to derail serious, bipartisan campaign finance reform through procedural means.

The bipartisan plan proposed by Representatives Christopher Shays and Martin Meehan is genuine, tough reform, supported by a large number of lawmakers of both parties. It would address serious flaws in the campaign finance system, by banning unregulated "soft money" raised by both parties, addressing backdoor campaign spending by outside organizations, and strengthening disclosure. This bipartisan measure is the best chance in years to reduce the role of special interests, give voters a louder voice, and treat fairly incumbents and challengers of both parties. This measure has the support of a majority of the Senate, and I believe that if it were allowed to come for a vote, it would have the support of a majority of the House as well.

Instead, the House leadership has determined to thwart serious reform. It has refused to allow the Shays-Meehan bill even to come up for a vote. Instead, it has offered a plan stocked with proposals -- including the so-called "Paycheck Protection" and "Election Integrity" provisions -- that are harshly partisan and plainly unacceptable.

The Honorable Newt Gingrich
Page Two

Behind the blizzard of proposals and procedural complications, one thing is clear: this is a transparent effort to block reform. I call on the House of Representatives to rise to its responsibility, bring the Shays-Meehan bill to an up-or-down vote, and give the American people the reform they deserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bill Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

The Honorable Newt Gingrich
Speaker of the
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rin", likely a stylized or abbreviated version of the sender's name.

The Honorable Richard A. Gephardt
Democratic Leader
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515