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For Immediate Release

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June 8, 2009

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### 2008 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN FINANCIAL ACTIVITY SUMMARIZED: RECEIPTS NEARLY DOUBLE 2004 TOTAL

WASHINGTON – Financial activity of 2008 presidential candidates and national party convention committees increased 80% in receipts over the 2004 presidential election, totaling more than \$1.8 billion. The Republican presidential nominee, Sen. John McCain (AZ), received \$84.1 million in public funds to conduct his general election campaign and raised an additional \$46.4 million for legal and accounting expenses. The Democratic presidential nominee, then-Sen. Barack Obama (IL), raised a total of \$745.7 million in private funds for his primary nomination and general election campaign. It was the first time in the history of presidential public financing that a major party nominee declined to accept public funds for the general election.

The two parties received \$16.8 million each from the treasury for their nominating conventions, while host committees raised a total of \$124.3 million in support of their activities. A table attached to this release summarizes these three categories of activity for the last four presidential campaigns.

Individuals, parties and other groups spent \$168.8 million independently advocating the election or defeat of presidential candidates during the 2008 campaign. In the three previous cycles, similar spending totaled \$192.4 million, \$14.7 million, and \$1.4 million, respectively. There is no limit on the amount that may be spent on these activities given that the spending is independent of the candidates.

In 2008, the Democratic National Committee (DNC) spent \$1.1 million on independent expenditures, while the Republican National Committee (RNC) spent \$53.5 million. The national parties also spent a combined \$25.3 million in coordination with the 2008 presidential campaigns

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during the general election period. Each party was permitted to spend up to \$19.15 million on this activity. In the three previous elections, parties spent \$32.1 million, \$27.2 million, and \$18.7 million, respectively, on coordinated expenditures.

Membership organizations reported spending \$18.1 million in communications to their members advocating the election or defeat of a presidential candidate -- an almost \$6 million increase over what they reported during the 2004 presidential election.

In 2008, groups reported spending \$27.8 million on electioneering communications that referenced a political candidate -- a decrease of \$13 million from the 2004 election. An electioneering communication is a broadcast, cable or satellite communication that refers to a clearly identified federal candidate and is distributed prior to an election. Additional tables attached to this release provide details about the sources of receipts for presidential pre-nomination campaigns and information about how the money was spent.

This was only the second cycle in which both major party nominees declined public matching funds during the primaries. The \$21.7 million paid in those funds to other primary candidates was the lowest since the first presidential election conducted under the public funding program in 1976. The Obama campaign's total receipts of \$745.7 million for the 2008 election are equivalent to more than half of the \$1.49 billion provided in public funds to all presidential candidates, parties, and conventions since the inception of the public funding program.

President Obama's campaign transferred more than \$41 million to Democratic Party committees at both the national and state levels, with \$8.5 million going to the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. The committee ended 2008 with \$18.3 million in cash on hand and \$1.9 in outstanding debt. Sen. McCain's presidential primary campaign transferred more than \$18.6 million to state and local party committees.

Overview of Presidential Financial Activity 1996 - 2008  
[\[excel\]](#) [\[pdf\]](#)

2008 Presidential Primary Campaign Receipts [\[excel\]](#) [\[pdf\]](#)

2008 Presidential Primary Campaign Disbursements [\[excel\]](#)  
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Presidential Public Funding History [\[excel\]](#) [\[pdf\]](#)


Obama Campaign Transfers to Parties [\[excel\]](#) [\[pdf\]](#)

McCain Campaign Transfers to Parties [\[excel\]](#) [\[pdf\]](#)

*The Federal Election Commission (FEC) is an independent regulatory agency that administers and enforces federal campaign finance laws. The FEC has jurisdiction over the financing of campaigns for the U.S. House, the U.S. Senate, the U.S. Presidency and the U.S. Vice Presidency. Established in*

*1975, the FEC is composed of six Commissioners who are nominated by the President and confirmed by the U.S. Senate.*

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