



INTERACTIVE ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAM

Presentation for the Federal Depository Library Program

The FEC and Federal Campaign Finance Law

**October 7, 2020
2:00 p.m. Eastern**



The FEC and Federal Campaign Finance Law



Presented by:
David Garr, Communications Specialist
FEC Information Division



Objectives

- ▣ Review historical background
- ▣ Provide overview of the Commission
- ▣ Discuss campaign finance laws
- ▣ Highlight FEC resources
- ▣ Answer your questions



Federal Election Commission

The Federal Election Commission (FEC) is the independent regulatory agency charged with administering and enforcing the federal campaign finance laws. The FEC has jurisdiction over the financing of campaigns for the U.S. House, Senate, and Presidency.



Federal Election Commission

Our mission is to protect the integrity of the federal campaign process by providing transparency, enforcing contribution restrictions, and fairly administering the Federal Election Campaign Act and related statutes.



Historical Background

- ▣ **1867 Naval Appropriations Bill**
- ▣ **1907 Tillman Act**
- ▣ **1925 Federal Corrupt Practices Act**
- ▣ **1939 Hatch Act**
- ▣ **1947 Taft Hartley Act**



Historical Background

- ▣ **Limit contribution amounts**
- ▣ **Restrict sources**
- ▣ **Control campaign spending**
- ▣ **Require public disclosure**



These laws were largely ignored



Historical Background

- ▣ **Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) - 1971**
 - **Imposed full reporting requirements**
 - **Limited spending on advertising**
 - **Allowed separate segregated funds**

- ▣ **Revenue Act of 1971**
 - **Public funding of Presidential elections**



Historical Background

- ▣ **Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) - 1974**
 - **Federal Election Commission**
 - ▣ **Enforce campaign finance laws**
 - ▣ **Write campaign finance regulations**
 - ▣ **Monitor compliance with FECA**



The Commission

- ▣ **Six Commissioners**
 - **Presidential Appointees**
 - **Six year terms**
 - **No more than three from same party**
- ▣ **Public Meetings**
- ▣ **Executive Sessions**



The Commission

Current



James E. "Trey" Trainor III

Chair

Republican



Steven T. Walther

Vice Chair

Independent



Ellen L. Weintraub

Democrat



Vacant seat



Vacant seat



Vacant seat

The Commission



Original FEC headquarters at 1325 K Street, NW

1975:
124 employees
Budget: \$6.25 M



The Commission



Current FEC headquarters at 1050 First Street, NE

2020:
330 employees
Budget: \$70 M



U.S. Elections

Voting



Financing



U.S. Elections

State/Local



Financing



U.S. Elections

State/Local



FEC



U.S. Elections

Money in Politics

- ▣ **\$8.6 billion spent on 2016 election**
- ▣ **\$8.8 billion spent on 2018 election**
- ▣ **\$9.5 billion spent on 2020 election through June**



U.S. Elections

2019/2020 American Spending on:

🍪 Waffle Day

🎃 Halloween (2019)

🇺🇸 Elections (through June 2020)

🏈 Super Bowl

❤️ Valentines Day



(billions of dollars)

FEC Mission

To protect the integrity of the federal campaign process by providing transparency, enforcing contribution restrictions, and fairly administering the FECA and related statutes

- ▣ **Administering public funding**
- ▣ **Facilitating disclosure**
- ▣ **Clarifying the law**
- ▣ **Enforcing the law**



Elements of the Current Law

- ▣ **Contribution limits**
- ▣ **Prohibited sources**
- ▣ **Presidential public funding**
- ▣ **Public disclosure**



Contribution Limits

Contribution limits for 2019-2020 federal elections

		Recipient				
		Candidate committee	PAC† (SSF and nonconnected)	Party committee: state/district /local	Party committee: national	Additional national party committee accounts‡
Donor	Individual	\$2,800* per election	\$5,000 per year	\$10,000 per year (combined)	\$35,500* per year	\$106,500* per account, per year
	Candidate committee	\$2,000 per election	\$5,000 per year	Unlimited transfers	Unlimited transfers	
	PAC: multicandidate	\$5,000 per election	\$5,000 per year	\$5,000 per year (combined)	\$15,000 per year	\$45,000 per account, per year
	PAC: nonmulticandidate	\$2,800* per election	\$5,000 per year	\$10,000 per year (combined)	\$35,500* per year	\$106,500* per account, per year
	Party committee: state/district/local	\$5,000 per election (combined)	\$5,000 per year (combined)	Unlimited transfers	Unlimited transfers	
	Party committee: national	\$5,000 per election**	\$5,000 per year	Unlimited transfers	Unlimited transfers	



Prohibitions

- ▣ **Prohibited from contributing to campaigns**
 - **Corporations**
 - **Labor organizations**
 - **Federal government contractors**
 - **Foreign nationals**
 - **Contributions in the name of another**
 - **Cash over \$100**



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Administering Public Funding

- ▣ **Public grant to general election nominees**
 - **Major party nominees eligible for full grant:**
 - ▣ 2016 Grant: \$96.14 million
 - ▣ 2020 Grant: \$103.7 million
 - **Minor party nominees eligible for partial grant based on performance in previous election**
 - **Other nominees eligible for some post-election funding if they receive $\geq 5\%$ of vote**



Administering Public Funding

Form **1040** Department of the Treasury—Internal Revenue Service (99) **2019** U.S. Individual Income Tax Return OMB No. 1545-0074 IRS Use Only—Do not write or staple in this space.

Filing Status Single Married filing jointly Married filing separately (MFS) Head of household (HOH) Qualifying widow(er) (QW)
 Check only one box. If you checked the MFS box, enter the name of spouse. If you checked the HOH or QW box, enter the child's name if the qualifying person is a child but not your dependent. ▶

Your first name and middle initial _____ Last name _____ Your social security number _____

If joint return, spouse's first name and middle initial _____ Spouse's social security number _____

Home address (number and street). If _____

City, town or post office, state, and ZIP _____

Foreign country name _____

Standard Deduction **Someone can claim**
 Spouse itemizes

Age/Blindness **You:** Were born before 1954 Were born after 1954

Dependents (see instructions):
 (1) First name _____ Last name _____ Child tax credit _____ Credit for other dependents _____

Presidential Election Campaign
 Check here if you, or your spouse if filing jointly, want \$3 to go to this fund. Checking a box below will not change your tax or refund. You Spouse

1 Wages, salaries, tips, etc. Attach Form(s) W-2 _____ **1** _____

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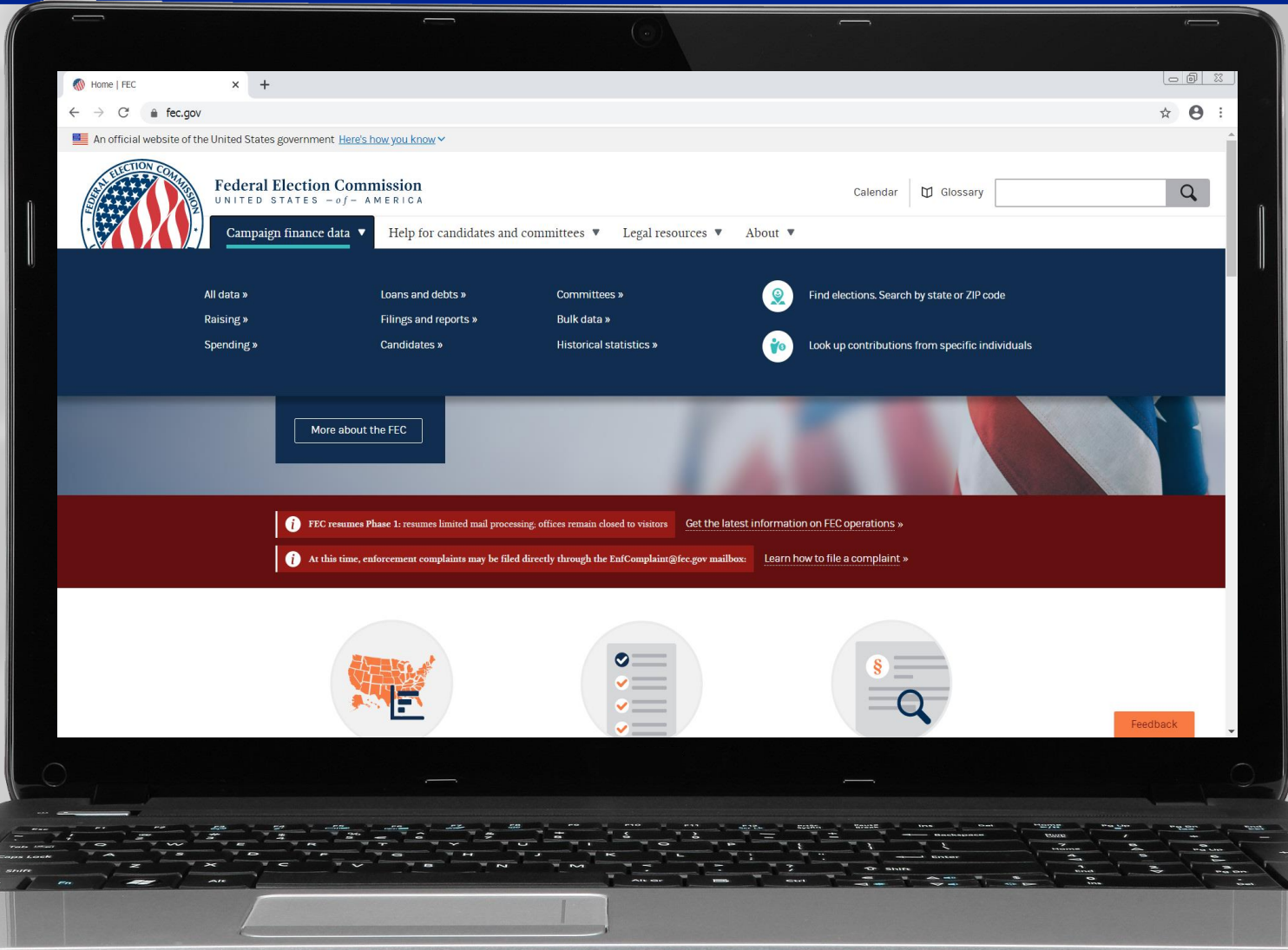


Facilitating Disclosure

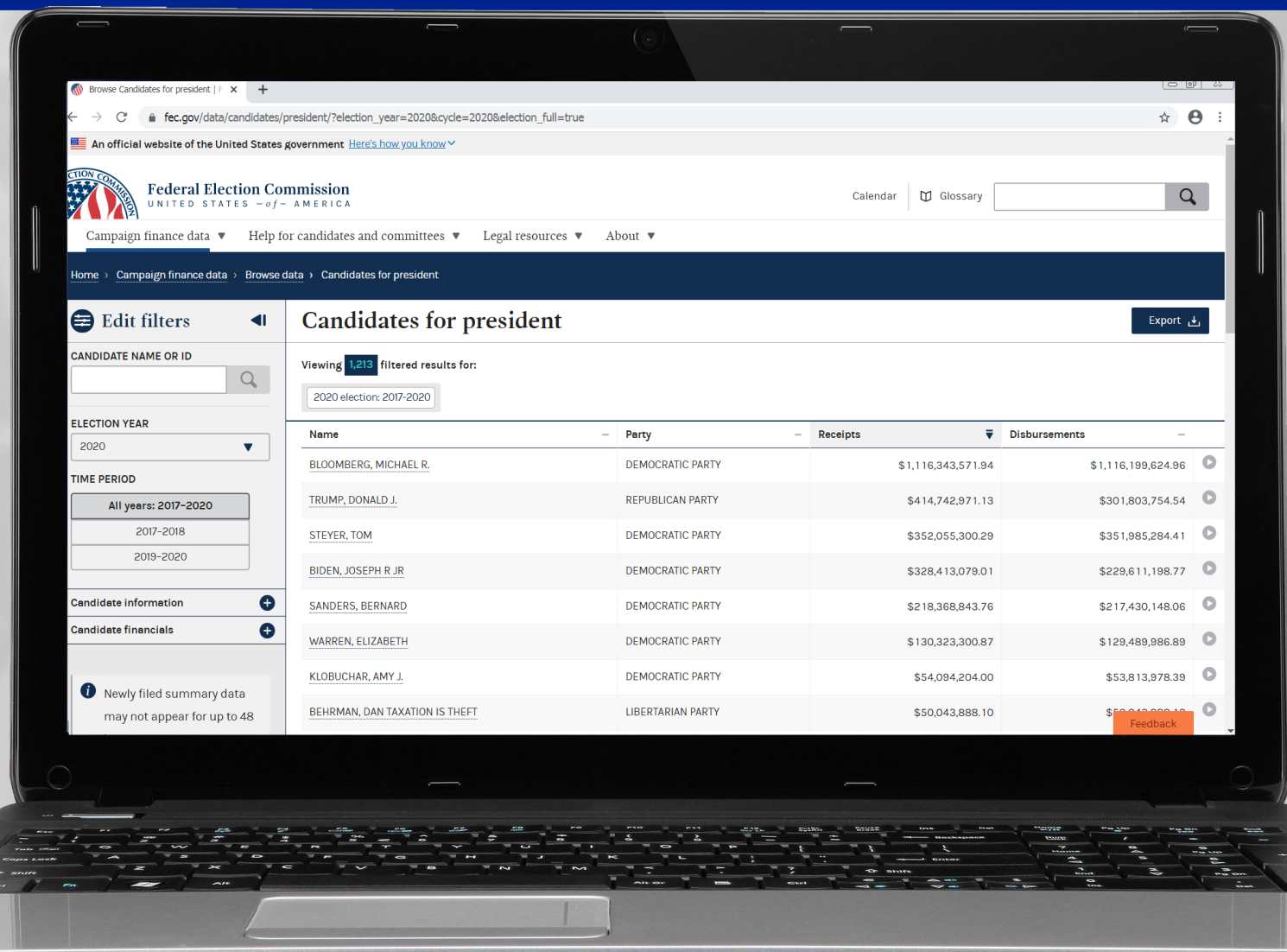
- ▣ **Public access to disclosure reports**
 - Reports publicly available \leq 48 hours of agency's receipt
 - Electronically-filed reports are available online almost immediately
 - Electronically registered committees are visible online the next day
 - FEC web site (www.fec.gov)
 - FEC Public Records Office
 - Reports reviewed for accuracy and compliance with law



Facilitating Disclosure - FEC.gov



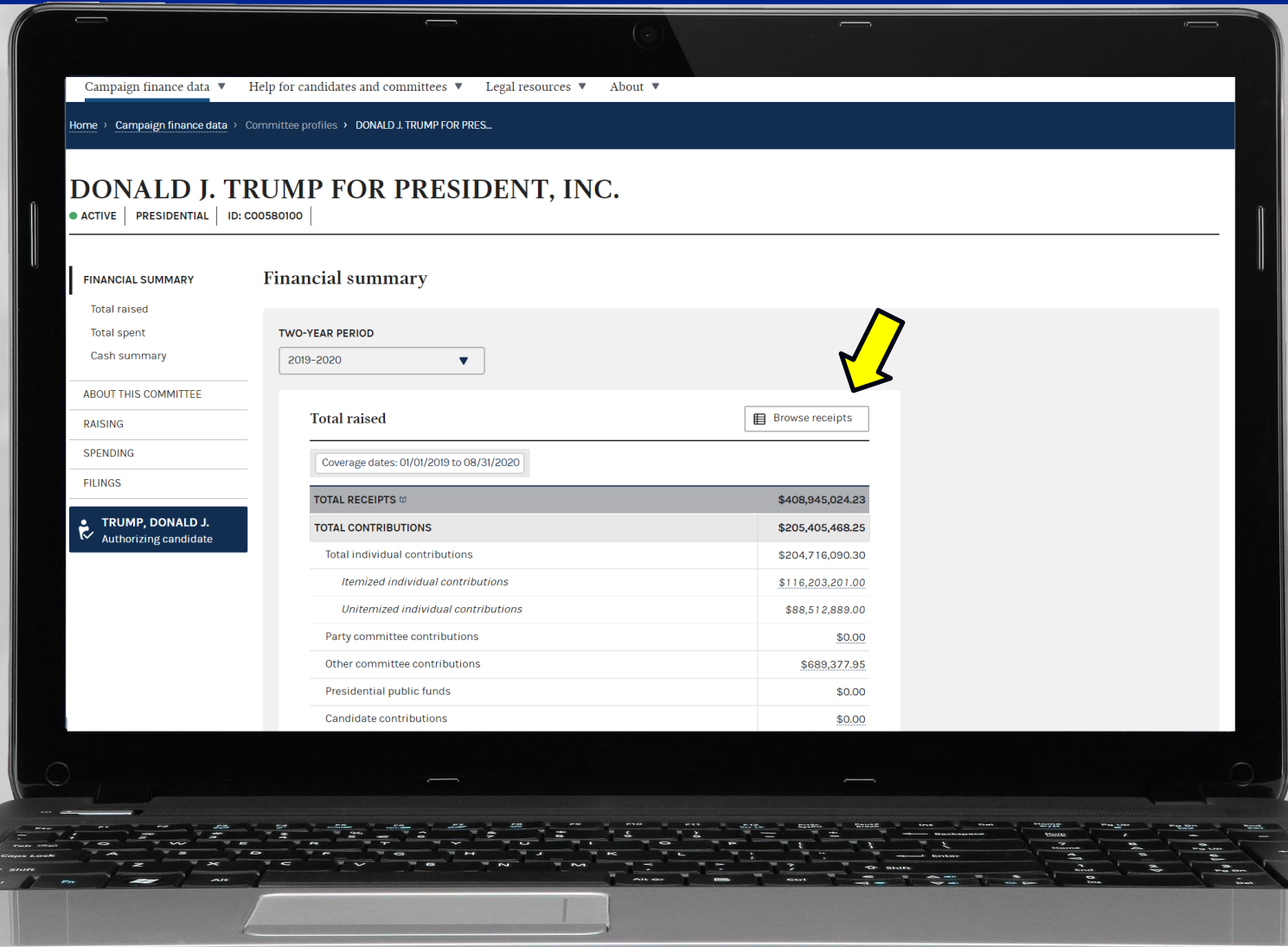
Facilitating Disclosure - FEC.gov



Viewing 1,213 filtered results for:
2020 election: 2017-2020

Name	Party	Receipts	Disbursements
BLOOMBERG, MICHAEL R.	DEMOCRATIC PARTY	\$1,116,343,571.94	\$1,116,199,624.96
TRUMP, DONALD J.	REPUBLICAN PARTY	\$414,742,971.13	\$301,803,754.54
STEYER, TOM	DEMOCRATIC PARTY	\$352,055,300.29	\$351,985,284.41
BIDEN, JOSEPH R JR	DEMOCRATIC PARTY	\$328,413,079.01	\$229,611,198.77
SANDERS, BERNARD	DEMOCRATIC PARTY	\$218,368,843.76	\$217,430,148.06
WARREN, ELIZABETH	DEMOCRATIC PARTY	\$130,323,300.87	\$129,489,986.89
KLOBUCHAR, AMY J.	DEMOCRATIC PARTY	\$54,094,204.00	\$53,813,978.39
BEHRMAN, DAN TAXATION IS THEFT	LIBERTARIAN PARTY	\$50,043,888.10	\$50,043,888.10

Facilitating Disclosure - FEC.gov



Campaign finance data | Help for candidates and committees | Legal resources | About

Home > Campaign finance data > Committee profiles > DONALD J. TRUMP FOR PRES...

DONALD J. TRUMP FOR PRESIDENT, INC.

● ACTIVE | PRESIDENTIAL | ID: CO0580100

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

- Total raised
- Total spent
- Cash summary

ABOUT THIS COMMITTEE

- RAISING
- SPENDING
- FILINGS

TRUMP, DONALD J.
Authorizing candidate

Financial summary

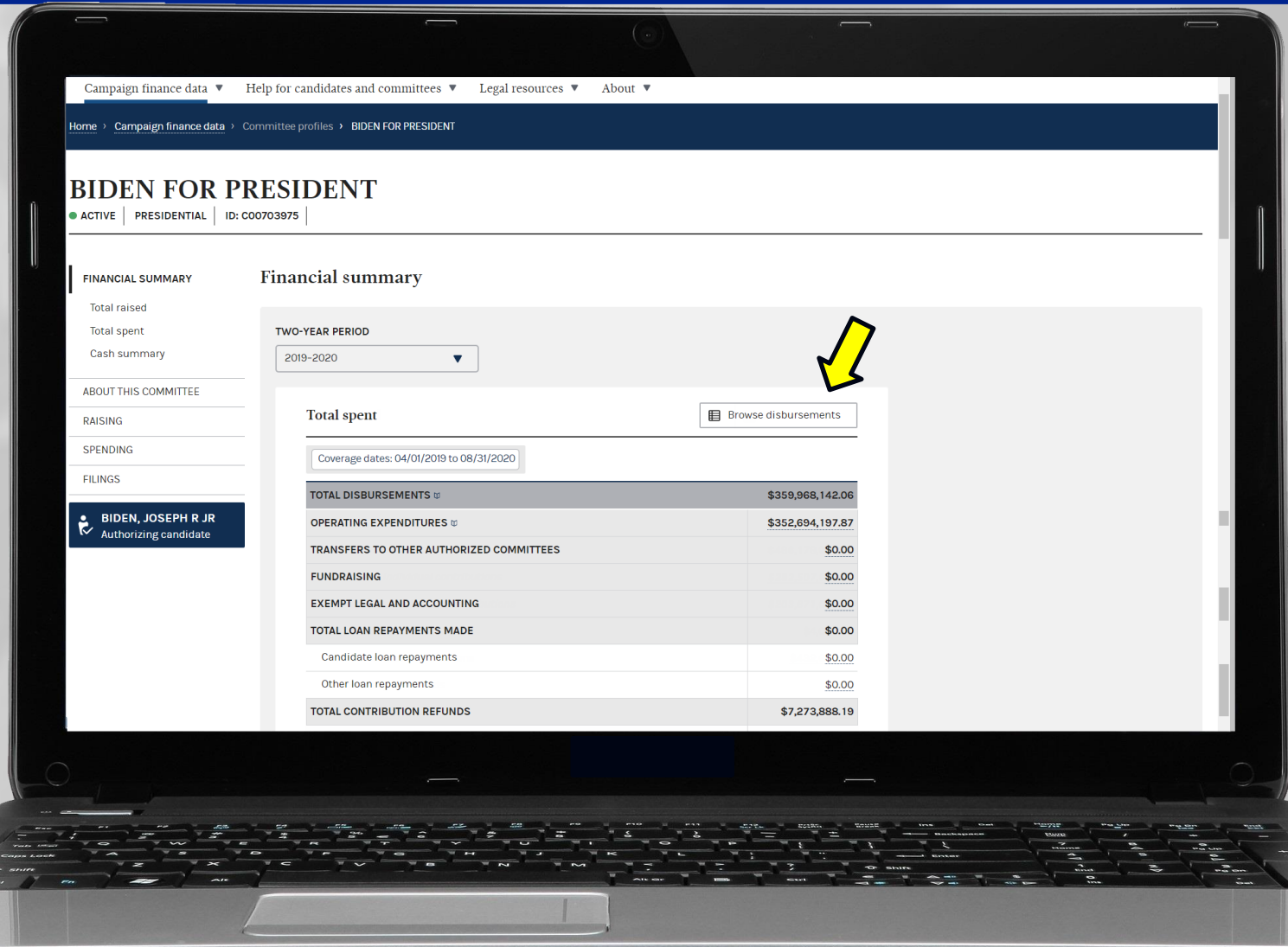
TWO-YEAR PERIOD
2019-2020

Total raised [Browse receipts](#)

Coverage dates: 01/01/2019 to 08/31/2020

TOTAL RECEIPTS	
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$408,945,024.23
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$205,405,468.25
Total individual contributions	\$204,716,090.30
Itemized individual contributions	\$116,203,201.00
Unitemized individual contributions	\$88,512,889.00
Party committee contributions	\$0.00
Other committee contributions	\$689,377.95
Presidential public funds	\$0.00
Candidate contributions	\$0.00

Facilitating Disclosure - FEC.gov



Campaign finance data | Help for candidates and committees | Legal resources | About

Home > Campaign finance data > Committee profiles > BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT

BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT

ACTIVE | PRESIDENTIAL | ID: C00703975

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

- Total raised
- Total spent
- Cash summary

ABOUT THIS COMMITTEE

- RAISING
- SPENDING
- FILINGS

BIDEN, JOSEPH R JR
Authorizing candidate

Financial summary

TWO-YEAR PERIOD
2019-2020

[Browse disbursements](#)

Coverage dates: 04/01/2019 to 08/31/2020

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$359,968,142.06
OPERATING EXPENDITURES	\$352,694,197.87
TRANSFERS TO OTHER AUTHORIZED COMMITTEES	\$0.00
FUNDRAISING	\$0.00
EXEMPT LEGAL AND ACCOUNTING	\$0.00
TOTAL LOAN REPAYMENTS MADE	\$0.00
Candidate loan repayments	\$0.00
Other loan repayments	\$0.00
TOTAL CONTRIBUTION REFUNDS	\$7,273,888.19

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- ▣ Facilitating disclosure
- ▣ **Clarifying the law**
- ▣ Enforcing the law

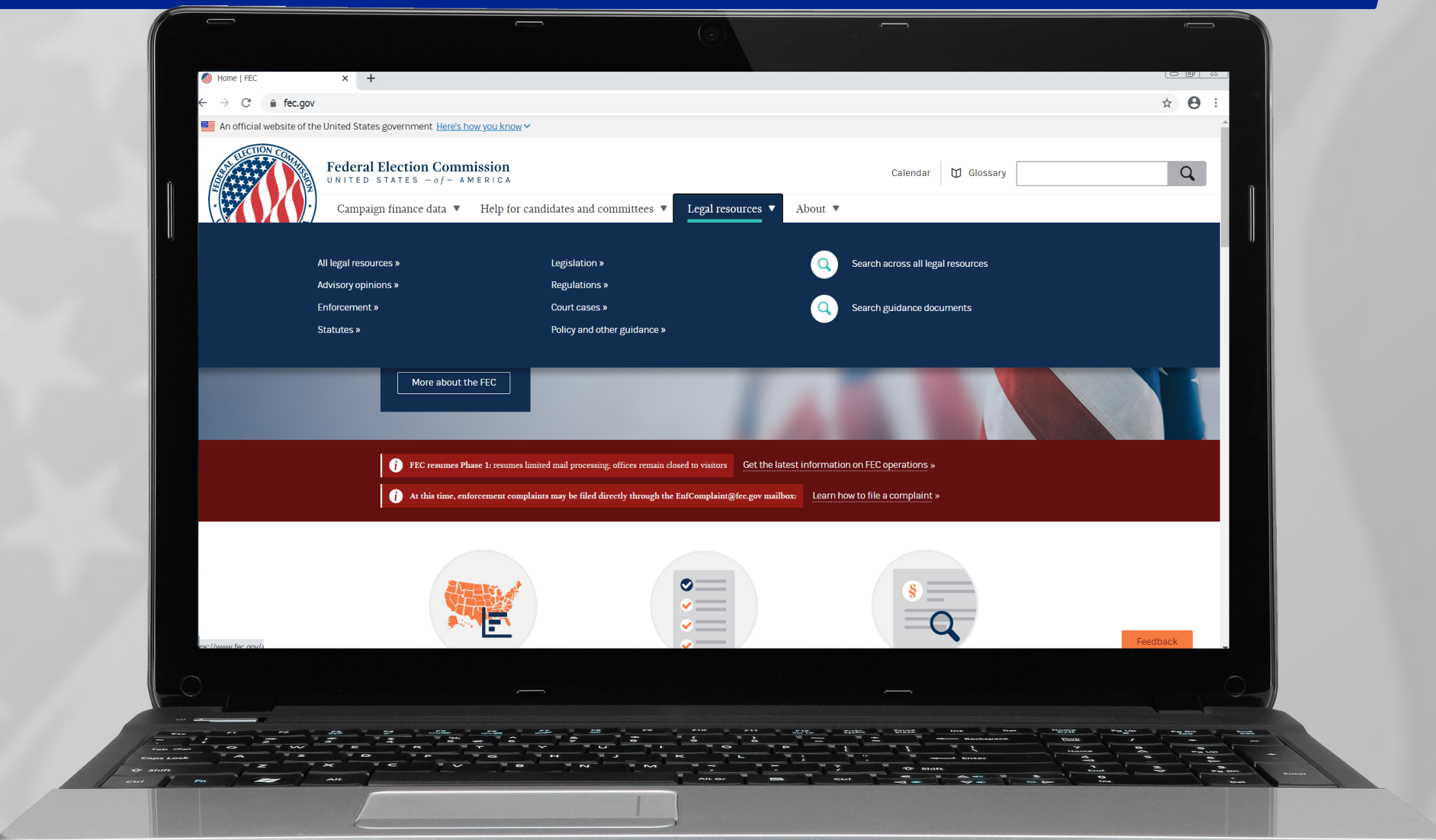


Clarifying the Law

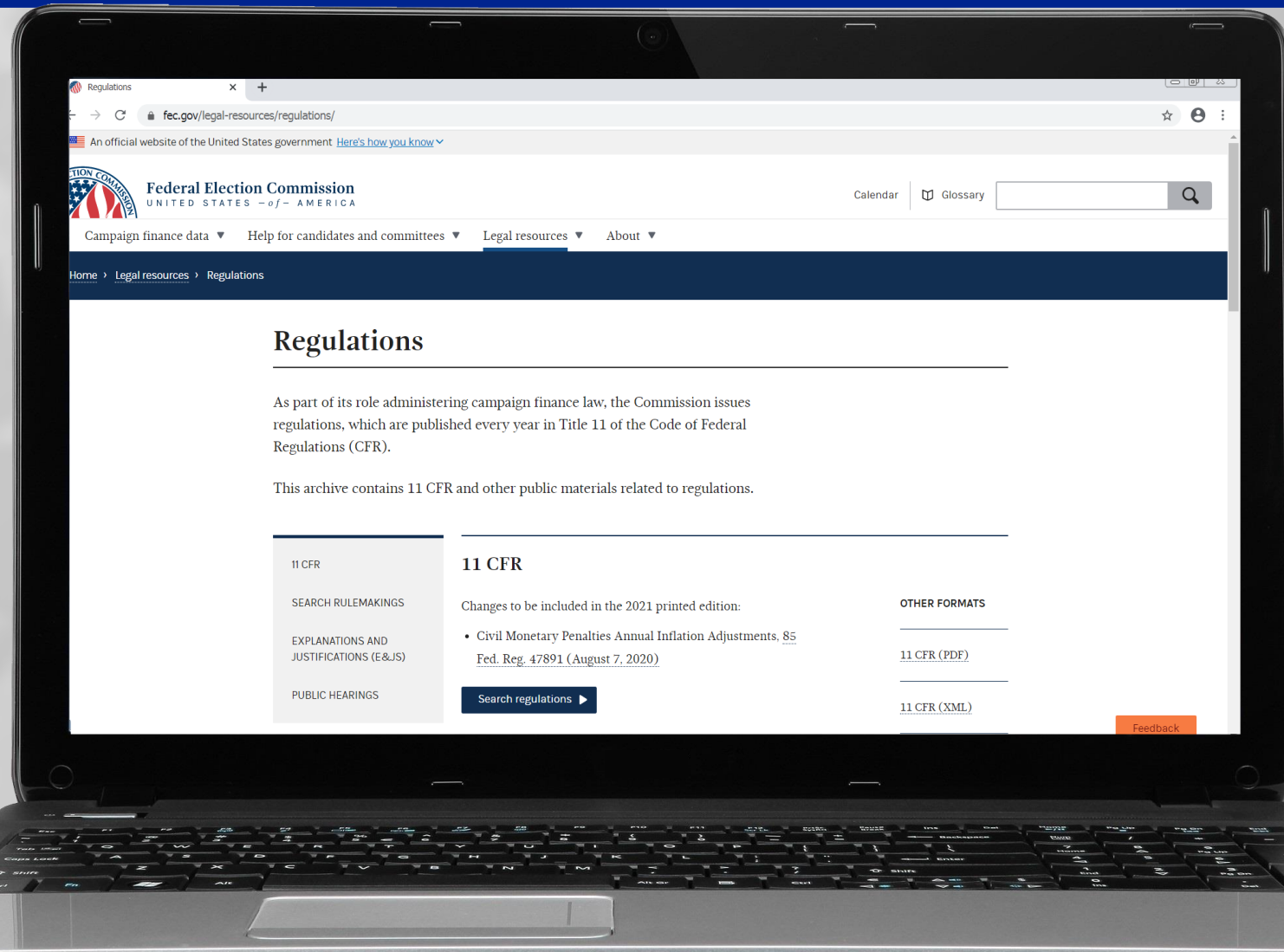
- ▣ **Regulations**
- ▣ **Advisory Opinions**
 - **Legal guidance in response to written inquiry**
- ▣ **Educational Outreach**
 - **Publications**
 - **Conferences and webinars**
 - **Toll-free telephone information**
 - **Online help and public email**



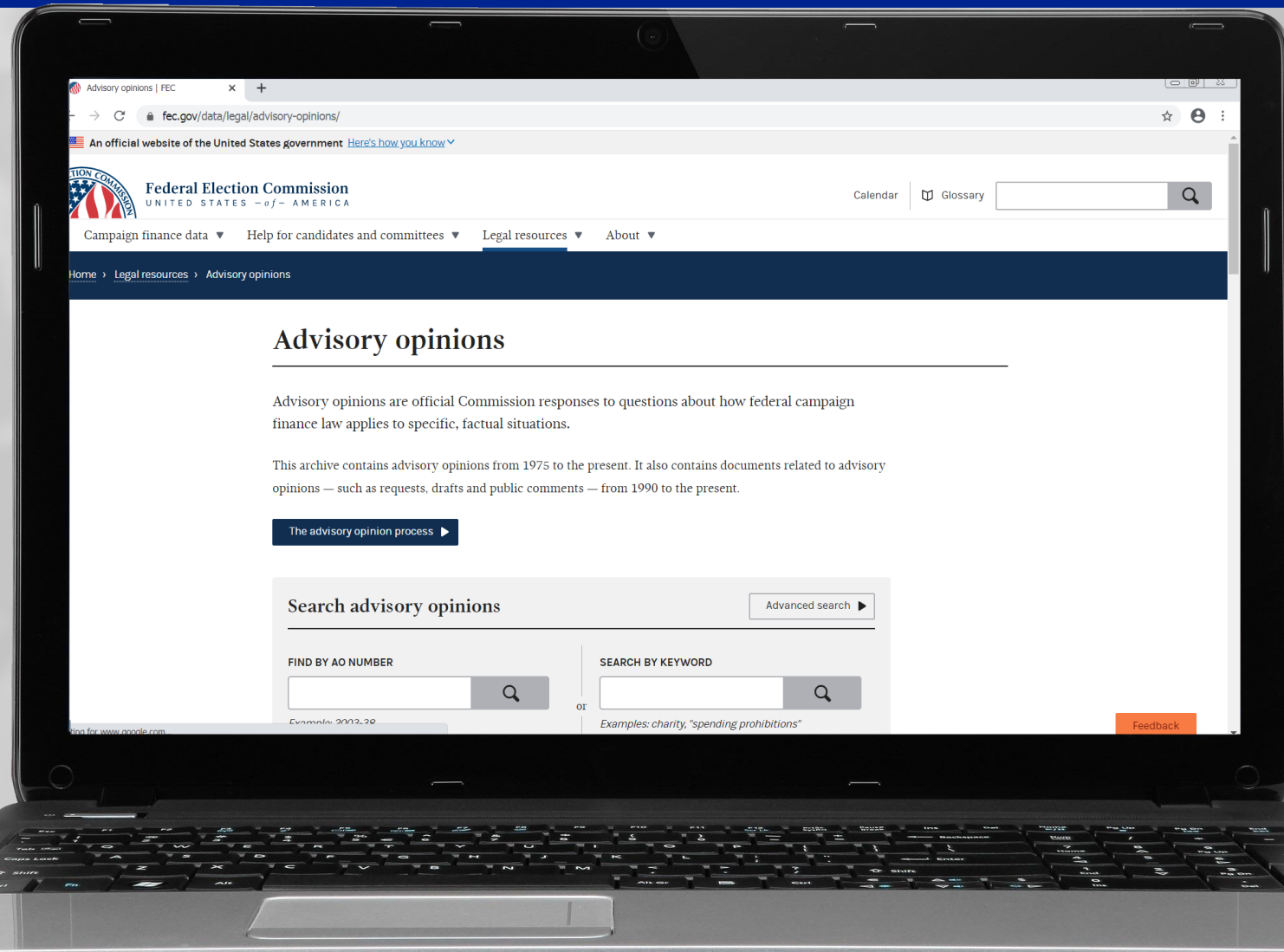
Clarifying the Law – Reg's & AOs



Clarifying the Law – Reg's & AOs



Clarifying the Law – Reg's & AOs



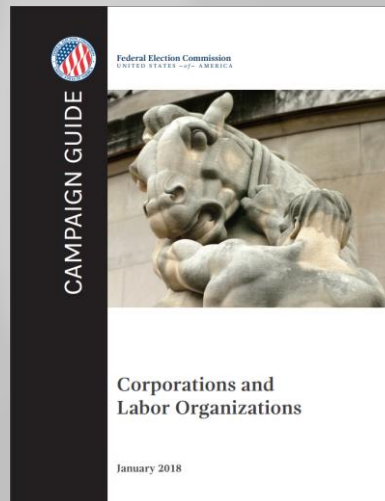
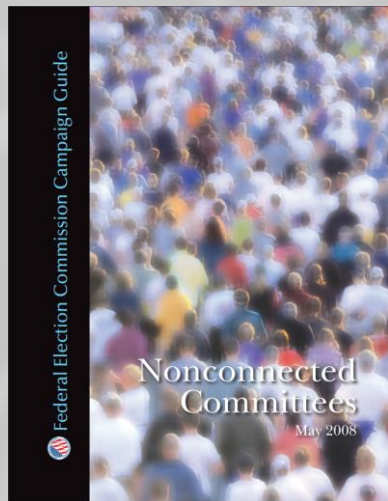
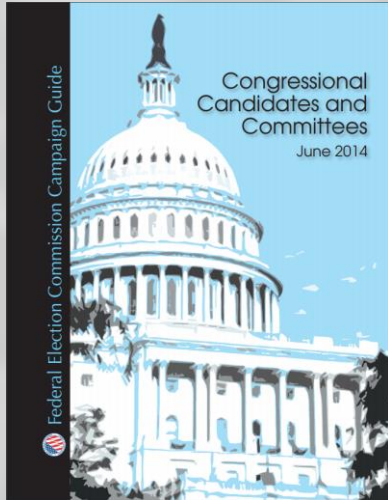
Clarifying the Law - Legal Resources

- ▣ Advisory Opinions
- ▣ Regulations
- ▣ Enforcement actions
- ▣ Statutes
- ▣ Legislation
- ▣ Court cases
- ▣ Audits
- ▣ Policy and other guidance

The screenshot shows the Federal Election Commission's website. At the top, the logo for the Federal Election Commission is visible, along with the text "Federal Election Commission UNITED STATES - of - AMERICA". Navigation links include "Calendar", "Glossary", "Campaign finance data", "Help for candidates and committees", "Legal resources", and "About". The main heading is "Legal resources", with a sub-heading "Explore relevant statutes, regulations, Commission actions and court cases. Making these resources public clarifies campaign finance legal requirements." Below this is a search bar labeled "Search across all legal resources" with a dropdown menu for "All sources" and a search icon. Examples of search terms are "1022; election meeting" and "More keyword options". Under "Advanced searches:", there are links for "Advisory opinions", "Regulations", "Closed Matters Under Review", and "Statutes". A "Browse legal resources" section features eight buttons: "Advisory opinions", "Enforcement of federal campaign finance law", "SFR Regulations", "U.S.C. Statutes", "Legislation", "Court cases", "Audits", and "Policy and other guidance". To the right, a "Legal news" section includes a search icon and "All news" button, followed by several news items with dates, such as "AOR 2020-04: Joan Farr for US Senate" (September 10, 2020) and "Court enters consent judgment between FEC and Jeremy Johnson" (September 3, 2020).



Clarifying the Law - Publications

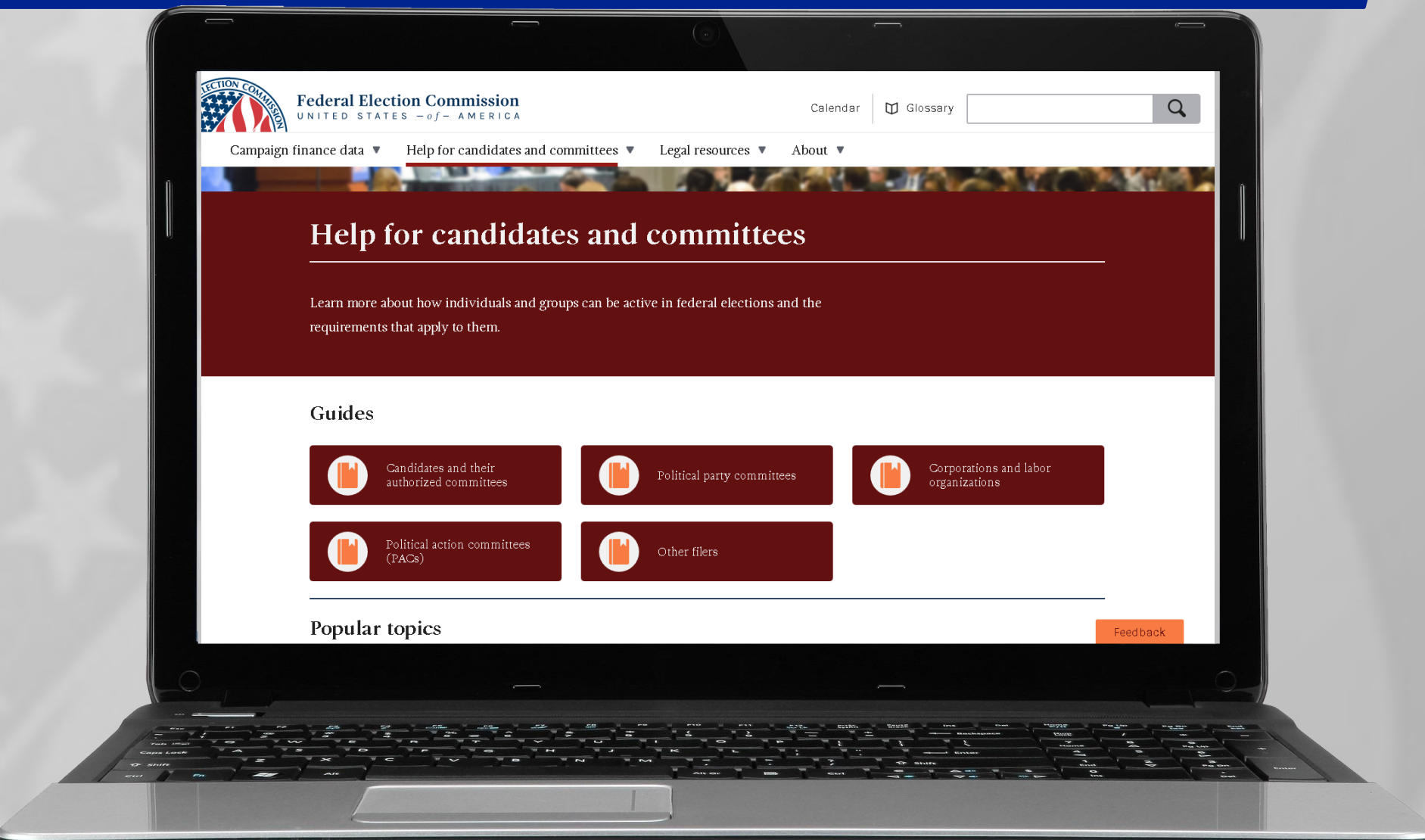


Campaign Guide Series:

- Congressional Candidates and Committees
- Political Party Committees
- Nonconnected Committees
- Corporations and Labor Organizations



Clarifying the Law – Publications



Federal Election Commission
UNITED STATES — of — AMERICA

Calendar | Glossary

Campaign finance data | **Help for candidates and committees** | Legal resources | About

Help for candidates and committees

Learn more about how individuals and groups can be active in federal elections and the requirements that apply to them.

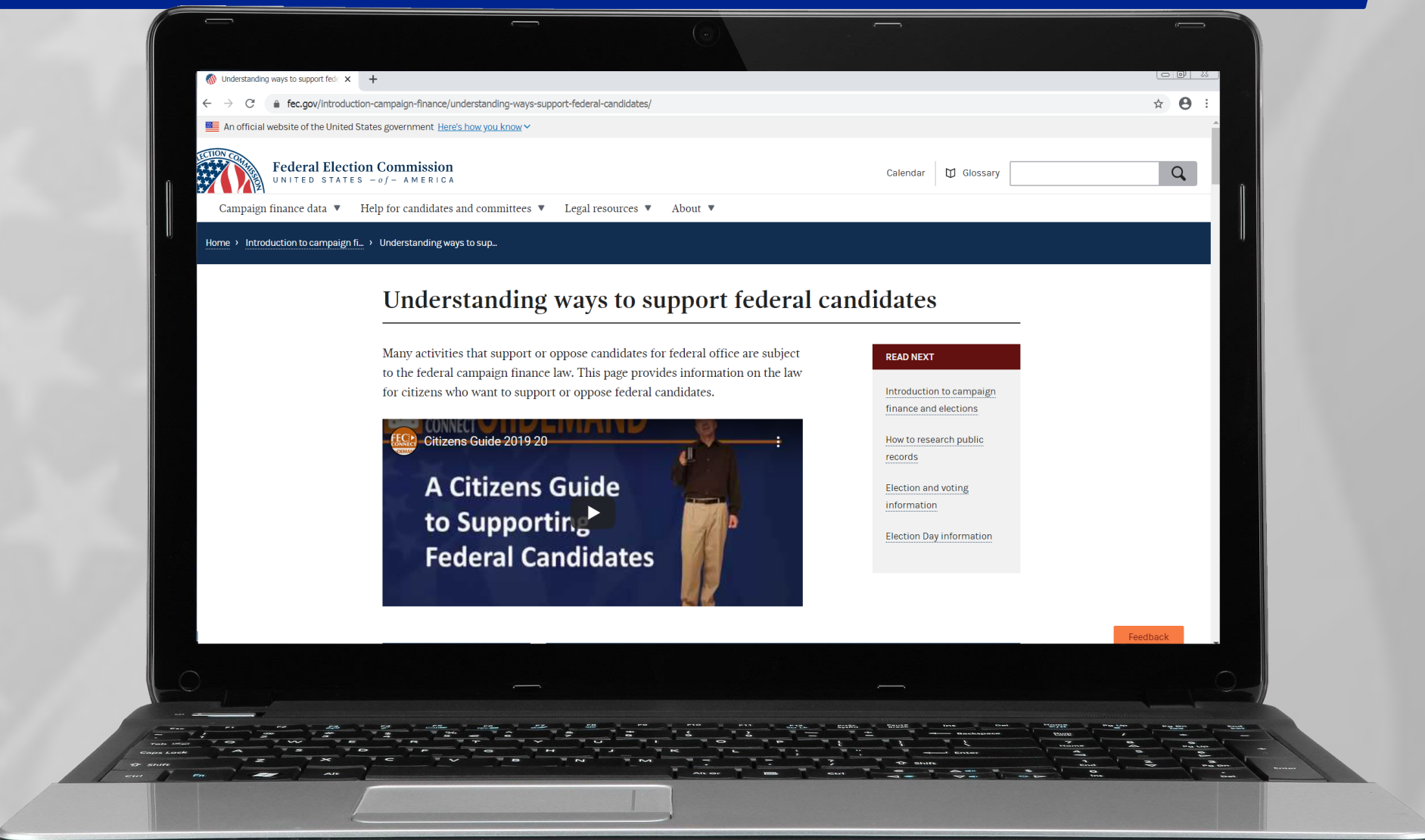
Guides

- Candidates and their authorized committees
- Political party committees
- Corporations and labor organizations
- Political action committees (PACs)
- Other filers

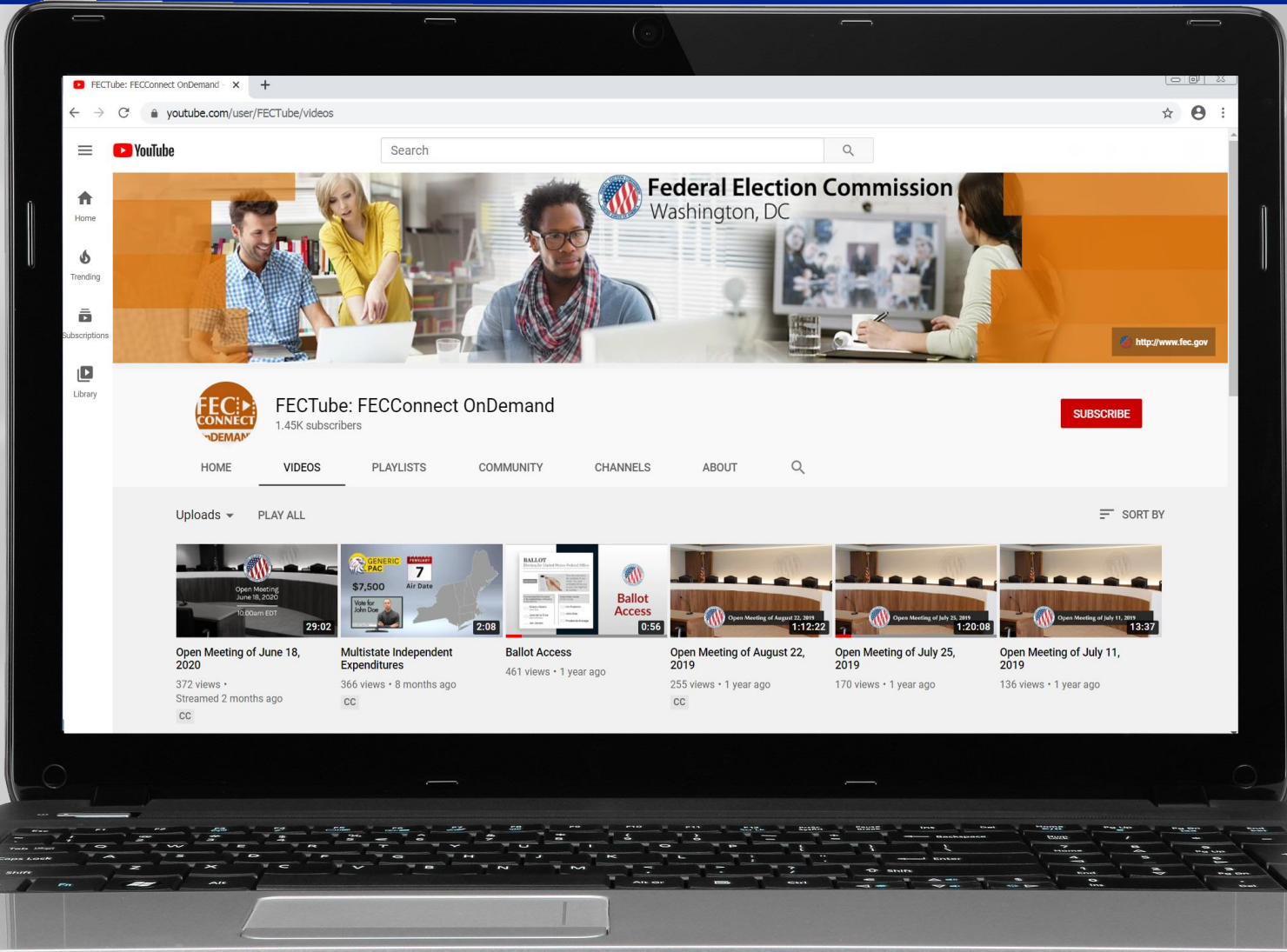
Popular topics

Feed back

Clarifying the Law – Citizens Guide



Clarifying the Law – Videos



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- ▣ Administering public funding
- ▣ Facilitating disclosure
- ▣ Clarifying the law
- ▣ **Enforcing the law**



Enforcing the Law

The FEC has exclusive jurisdiction over the civil enforcement of the federal campaign finance law.

- ▣ **Administrative Fine Program**
- ▣ **Alternative Dispute Resolution**
- ▣ **Audits**
- ▣ **Monetary penalties**
- ▣ **Matters Under Review (MURs)**



FEC Website Demonstration

<https://www.fec.gov>



Any Questions?

