

February 13, 2002

Akin Votes to Uphold First Amendment Rights and for Straightforward Soft-Money Ban

Washington, D.C.- Congressman Todd Akin voted against H.R. 2356, the Shays-Meehan version of Campaign Finance Reform legislation. Akin voted for an amendment in the form of a substitute offered by Majority Leader Dick Armey. The substitute would have immediately banned soft money without the many loopholes, gimmicks and exceptions in H.R. 2356.

Akin released the following statement:

“Shays-Meehan is not reform; it is anti-democratic. The bill is blatantly unconstitutional and hostile to free speech. It will muzzle citizen groups by preventing them from placing ads on radio and TV 60 days prior to an election. The bill also delays implementation until after November’s election. The right to free speech is one of our most cherished and guarded rights and should not be infringed.

“Shays-Meehan has been misrepresented as reform. It contains numerous exceptions and gimmicks on the soft-money ban, including a \$60 million dollar loophole and the ability to turn soft money into hard. In effect, such a bill will act as an incumbency protection plan.

“If it is the will of Congress to ban soft money, it should be banned completely and without delay and without loopholes that create an uneven playing field. It is for that reason I voted for Armey’s substitute and against Shays-Meehan.”