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Shaun McCutcheon v. Federal Election Commission challenges the constitutionality of federal limits on the total an individual can contribute to federal candidates, political parties, and political action committees (PACs).

McCutcheon v. FEC: Three Potential Outcomes

1. The court could reject McCutcheon's argument outright, thereby maintaining existing limits on aggregate contributions.
2. The court could accept McCutcheon's argument and eliminate all aggregate limits, thereby abolishing the \$123,200 biennial limit as well as the separate sub-limits for candidates and political and party committees.
3. Third, the court could adopt a **hybrid option**, which would preserve aggregate limits on donations to political parties and PACs but eliminate others, such as those to candidates.

Any Ruling Favorable to the Plaintiff in *McCutcheon* Would Allow Individuals to Make Vastly Larger Contributions Via Joint Fundraising Committees (JFCs)

- **\$75,800** is the amount that President Obama solicited for his JFC in the 2012 cycle. In theory, an individual could have contributed as much as \$117,000 to a JFC in 2012.
- **\$2.5 million** is the amount a single donor could contribute to a joint fundraising committee even if the court maintains aggregate limits on donations to party committees but eliminates aggregate limits on contributions to candidates.
- **\$5.9 million** is the amount a single donor could contribute to a joint fundraising committee if the Supreme Court eliminates all aggregate limits on campaign contributions.

The Hybrid Option Would Also Effectively Enable Donors to Vastly Exceed Legal Limits via Candidate to Party Transfers

- If the court chooses the hybrid option described above, joint fundraising committees and the elected officials who administer them could solicit checks of at least \$2.5 million from major donors. The vast majority of these contributions would be distributed to House and Senate candidates in increments of \$5,200. However, because candidates could transfer their share of contributions to party committees, party leaders would likely pressure candidates to redirect that money to back party committees. **Public Citizen calculated that transfers from candidates in uncompetitive races to party committees would be \$1.8 million per \$2.5 million "max donor."**
- **\$74 million.** The amount that candidates in uncompetitive races could transfer to the national party committees combined, assuming that each party has 40 "max donors" under the new rules.
- **24 times.** The amount by which a \$2.5 million donor would effectively be exceeding the legal limit when candidates in uncompetitive races collectively transfer \$1.8 million to party committees.

Conclusion: Any Ruling that Erodes Current Aggregate Limits Would Exacerbate the Likelihood of Large Contributions, which the Supreme Court Has Historically Construed as Heightening the Risk of Corruption.