

# The New York Times

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To the Editor:

Mitch McConnell, the Senate Republican leader, argues that the low percentage of taxpayers using the \$3 checkoff on their federal tax forms demonstrates disapproval of public financing. This is misleading.

In 2006, Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research conducted a poll, commissioned by the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University, where I am counsel, to test the reasons taxpayers did or did not check off the election fund box. Two-thirds of those polled lacked basic knowledge about the fund.

Many taxpayers were born after it was established post-Watergate, and the last major public education effort on the fund was in 1993. Unsurprisingly, taxpayers who lack familiarity with the fund are less inclined to participate.

The fund can be revived through legislative fixes that make it better suited to current election conditions and by a public education campaign about its purpose.

Ciara Torres-Spelliscy  
New York, Jan. 23, 2007