



Alvarado vs. Garcia:

February 27, 2013

Dueling Values Fund Houston Senate Race

The two finalists in Saturday’s runoff to replace Senator Mario Gallegos both are female Hispanic veterans of Houston Democratic politics. Analyzing the \$2.1 million that Rep. Carol Alvarado and ex-Harris County Commissioner Sylvia Garcia have raised since Senator Gallego’s October death, *Lobby Watch* finds that major funding differences underlie the surface similarities of these candidates.

The top source of Alvarado’s funding was the Ideological & Single-Issue sector, which supplied 23 percent of her money. Alvarado’s No. 1 contributor, Texans for Lawsuit Reform (TLR), supplied 17 cents of every dollar that Alvarado raised. During the latest election cycle TLR took \$1 million from nuclear waste king Harold Simmons, who supplied 12 percent of that PAC’s cash.¹

TLR’s quest to insulate people like Simmons from legal liabilities puts it at loggerheads with Garcia’s top funding source. The Lawyers & Lobbyists sector supplied 77 percent of her war chest. Houston’s Mostyn Law Firm was Garcia’s No. 1 contributor. Along with affiliated attorneys and the Mostyn-funded

Back to Basics and TOP PACs,² this plaintiff firm gave Garcia \$711,038—a remarkable two-thirds of her total.

By contrast, Alvarado’s top contributor from this sector was the lobbyist HillCo PAC. Its top donor is homebuilder Bob Perry, who is a HillCo client and a top contributor to TLR.

Alvarado’s No. 2 contributor is Stand for Children Texas PAC. Most of its money in this past cycle came from investment executive Anthony Annunziato and Houston philanthropist Laura Arnold.³

A son of Children’s Defense Fund founder Marian Wright Edelman started Stand for Children to boost the funding and performances of public

Alvarado & Garcia Raised \$1.8 Million Since Gallegos Died

Candidate	Total Raised	
	10/17/12-2/20/13	Money in Bank On 2/20/2013
Carol Alvarado	\$1,059,780	\$99,432
Sylvia Garcia	\$1,075,392	\$119,228
TOTALS	\$2,135,172	\$218,660

schools. Some grassroots members say that the group’s national leaders lost their chasing money and influence.⁴

Founder Jonah Edelman boasted about spending millions of dollars on Illinois lobbyists and politicians to pass restrictions on teacher-union bargaining rights. We had the “potential to jam this proposal down their [unions] throats the same way we jammed pension reform down their throats,” he said in 2011.⁵

The Labor sector furnished 6 percent of Garcia’s war chest, led by Longshoremen, Teamsters, Pipe Fitters and Plumbers locals. Police and fire unions led Alvarado’s labor support.

Finance, Insurance and Real Estate interests ranked as Alvarado’s No. 2 industry, supplying 13 percent of her funds. Alvarado top donors from this sector were the state Realtors PAC, ex-

Top Contributors to Carol Alvarado

Amount	Contributor (Affiliation)	City
\$184,000	Texans for Lawsuit Reform PAC	Austin
\$54,317	Stand for Children Texas PAC	Austin
\$50,104	HillCo PAC	Austin
\$49,026	Houston Police Officers Union PAC	Houston
\$40,000	John/Barbara Nau (Silver Eagle Distrib.)	Houston
\$30,000	Texas Association of Realtors PAC	Austin
\$30,000	Bill H./Andrea White (Lazard Freres)	Houston
\$21,000	Texas Medical Association PAC	Austin
\$20,000	Houston Fire Fighters PAC	Houston
\$16,145	Beer Alliance of Texas PAC	Austin
\$15,000	Texas Oil & Gas Association PAC	Austin
\$10,457	Landry's Restaurants PAC	Houston
\$10,000	Joe Huggins III (Houston Distributing)	Houston
\$10,000	Mickey Lawal (CAMAC Energy)	Houston
\$10,000	Kamoru Lawal (CAMAC Energy)	Houston
\$10,000	Kase Lawal (CAMAC Energy)	Houston
\$10,000	Richard Raymond Campaign	Laredo
\$10,000	Ryan & Co. Texas PAC	Dallas

Note: These contributors accounted for 55% of Alvarado’s money.

Houston Mayor Bill White (now of investment bank Lazard Freres) and corporate tax consultant Ryan & Co.

Alvarado and Garcia Contributions by Interest (Oct. 17, 2012 to Feb. 22, 2013)

Interest of Contributors	Alvarado Amount	Alvarado Share	Garcia Amount	Garcia Share
Agriculture	\$1,500	<1%	\$500	<1%
Communications/Electronics	\$18,150	2%	\$7,350	1%
Construction	\$41,550	4%	\$24,600	2%
Energy/Nat’l Resources/Waste	\$90,825	9%	\$3,500	<1%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	\$139,874	13%	\$25,600	2%
Health	\$49,950	5%	\$6,674	1%
Ideological/Single Issue	\$247,695	23%	\$23,500	2%
Labor	\$93,526	9%	\$65,712	6%
Lawyers & Lobbyists	\$139,222	13%	\$824,519	77%
Miscellaneous Business	\$123,857	12%	\$11,100	1%
Other	\$20,695	2%	\$14,302	1%
Transportation	\$21,700	2%	\$13,000	1%
Unknown	\$71,236	7%	\$55,035	5%
TOTAL	\$1,059,780	100%	\$1,075,392	100%

Alvarado received \$30,000 from the Lawal family that owns Houston’s CAMAC Energy. Seizing a CAMAC-leased jet in 2011 with Mickey Lawal aboard, Congo authorities also confiscated stashes of gold and more than \$6 million in cash tied to an alleged gold-smuggling scheme. A Texas jury then hit CAMAC and Mickey Lawal with a \$32 million verdict for abusing the confiscated jet’s lease.⁶

Gambling interests rank among the top contributors to both women. Alvarado received \$16,957 from Landry’s Restaurants PAC and owner Tilman Fertitta, who promotes legalized Texas casinos. Oklahoma’s Choctaw Nation gave Garcia \$5,000. Alvarado’s top contributors also include beer distributors, who are watching pending bills that would promote competition by craft brewers.⁷ •

Top Contributors to Silvia Garcia

Amount	Contributor (Affiliation)	City
\$356,750	Mostyn Law Firm	Houston
\$304,357	Texas Organizing Project TOP PAC	San Antonio
\$25,000	Nelson J. Roach (Nix Patterson & Roach)	Daingerfield
\$20,000	Mike Ramsey PC	Beaumont
\$16,000	Eberstein & Witherite	Dallas
\$14,931	Steve/Amber Mostyn (Mostyn Law Firm)	Houston
\$13,539	International Longshoremen's Assn.	New York
\$12,500	Teamsters Union	Houston
\$10,000	Back to Basics PAC	Austin
\$10,000	Pipe Fitters Union	Houston
\$10,000	Plumbers Union	Houston
\$9,300	Lillie Schechter Consulting	Houston
\$8,000	Am. Fed. State Co.& Mun'l Employees	Washington
\$7,500	Arnold & Itkin LLP	Houston
\$5,000	Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma	Durant, OK
\$5,000	Communication Workers of America	Austin
\$5,000	Sherry/Gerald Merfish (Emily's List)	Houston
\$5,000	Ricarhd/Ginni Mithoff (Mithoff & Jacks)	Houston
\$5,000	George Pontikes (Satterfield/Pontikes Const.)	Houston
\$5,000	Michael R. Ramsey (Mostyn Law Firm)	Beaumont
\$5,000	George Shipley (Shipley & Associates)	Austin
\$5,000	Steve Stewart (Gulf Winds Int'l)	Humble
\$5,000	Tommy Stewart (Gulf Winds Int'l)	Humble
\$5,000	John Eddie Williams (Willisams Kherkher)	Houston
\$5,000	Russell Ybarra (Gringo's Mexican Kitchen)	Houston

Note: These contributors account for 81% of Garcia’s Money.

Notes:

¹ TLR also had four \$50,000 contributors, each accounting for 6 percent of its funds that cycle. They are developers Bob Perry and Richard Weekley, investment executive Anthony Annunziato and electricity and sports mogul Robert McNair.

² The Service Employees International Union gave \$19,256, or 4 percent of TOP PAC’s total. Back to Basics raised \$491,560 in the 2012 cycle. Mostyn supplied 97 percent. The remainder came from Citizens for Texas PAC which was exclusively funded by Bill White’s campaign funds.

³ Husband John Arnold made a fortune running an energy investment fund.

⁴ “Why I Stopped Helping Stand for Children,” *Washington Post*, July 14, 2011.

⁵ “Simmering Discontent Puts Stand for Children In Hot Water,” *Portland Tribune*, July 19, 2011. “Jonah Edelman On Illinois School Reform: Stand for Children Head Talks Political Maneuvers,” *Huffington Post*, July 12, 2011.

⁶ “Jet Used In Gold Scam Costs Houston Company \$32 Million,” *Houston Chronicle*, September 21, 2012.

⁷ “Craft Brewers Hanker to Pour,” *Austin American-Statesman*, October 13, 2012.