

News Release

Texans for Public Justice ** 609 W. 18th Street, Suite E, ** Austin, TX 78701

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Texas' 2000 PAC Spending Exceeds 1998 Gubernatorial Election Cycle

Business Interests Dominate \$54 Million in PAC Expenditures

Austin, TX: A shrinking number of Texas political action committees (PACs) set a new record by spending \$54 million in the 2000 election cycle, a new study reports. This spending was up \$2 million over what PACs spent in the 1998 *gubernatorial* election cycle and increased \$11 million over the previous *non-gubernatorial* cycle in 1996. (Political spending spikes in gubernatorial cycles because they involve high-profile races for statewide offices such as governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general and comptroller.)

This PAC spending increase occurred despite the fact that fewer PACs are spending money to influence Texas politics. In the 2000 cycle, 865 PACs reported expenditures of at least \$1, down from 892 active PACs in 1998 and 910 PACs in 1996. Business interests dominated PAC spending in 2000, spending 63 percent of the total.

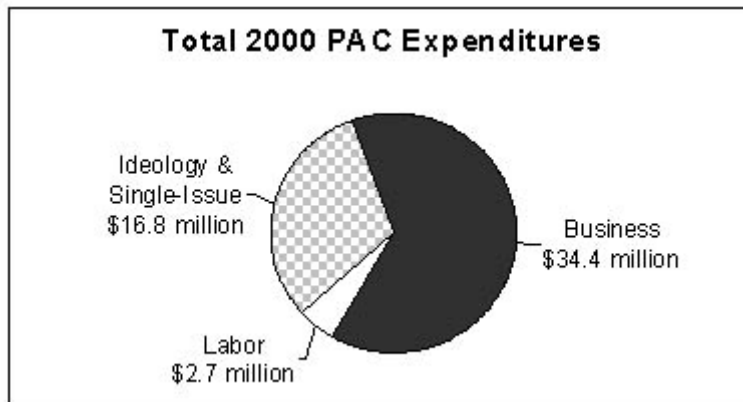
“Spending by PACs that represent consumers, workers and the environment can’t hold a candle to the millions spent by business PACs,” said Texans for Public Justice Director Craig McDonald. “Corporate and other business interests dominate Texas PAC spending—just as they dominate our legislative process.”

The new report, [Texas PACs: 2000 Election Cycle](#), identifies the biggest PACs in Texas and classifies PACs by their economic and ideological interests. Major report findings include:

- Business interests spent 64 percent of all Texas PAC money, while Ideological and Single-Issue PACs (including political party committees) spent 31 percent and Labor PACs spent just 5 percent.
- Texas’ 35 largest PACs—which spent more than \$300,000 apiece—accounted for more than half of all PAC spending.
- The top two PACs belonged to the Texas Democratic Party (\$6 million) and Republican Party of Texas (\$2.7 million).
- The top Business PACs were the plaintiff lawyers’ new Texas 2000 PAC (\$2 million) and the Texas Association of Realtors PAC (\$1.5 million).
- Texans for Lawsuit Reform had the largest Single-Issue PAC (\$1.4 million).

PAC trends tracked in the new report include:

- The biggest new PACs (led by Texas 2000);
- The largest vanished PACs (led by “Eight in ‘98”); and
- The fastest-growing PACs (led by the Texas Association of Dairymen).



The chart at the left breaks down Texas PAC spending into three major interest categories. The chart below shows an industry breakdown of Texas' 498 Business PACs.



The **Texas PACs 2000** report is available at Texans for Public Justice's website:

<http://www.tpj.org>

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[Texans for Public Justice](http://www.tpj.org) is a non-profit, non-partisan research and advocacy organization that tracks the role of money in Texas politics.