



Texas PACs: 2012 Election Cycle Spending

Main Report

I.	Total Texas PAC Spending	1.
II.	Business, Ideological & Labor PACs	2.
III.	Top Business PAC Categories	4.
	Energy & Natural Resources PACs	5.
	Lawyers & Lobbyists PACs	9.
	Health PACs	11.
	Real Estate PACs	14.
IV.	Ideological & Single-Interest PACs	16.
V.	Top Labor PACs	24.
VI.	Specific-Purpose PACs	25.
VII.	Texas' Biggest PACs	27.
VIII.	Notes	32.

Special Sections

Fast-Growth PACs	8.
Dark-Money Sorcerers	20.
Top New PACs	22.
Shrinking PACs	23.
Extinct PACs	24.

Texans for Public Justice is a non-profit, non-partisan advocacy and research organization that tracks the role of money in Texas politics.

© Copyright Texans for Public Justice, October 2013

Austin, TX 78701

(512) 472-9770

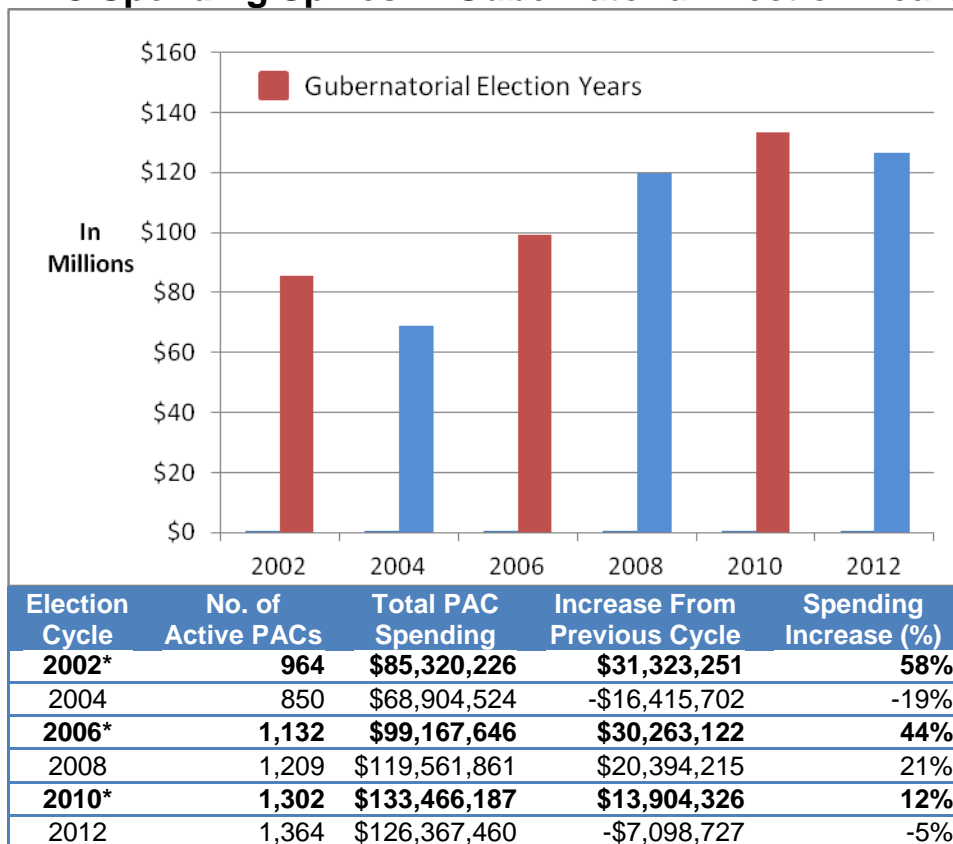
tpj@tpj.org

www.tpj.org

I. Total Texas PAC Spending

The bulk of this report identifies and ranks Texas' top general-purpose political action committees (PACs) in the 2012 election cycle (one chapter also analyzes special-purpose PACs). Rankings are based on the total expenditures that PACs electronically reported to the Texas Ethics Commission. During the two-year election cycle ending in December 2012, 1,364 general-purpose PACs reported expenditures.¹ There were more PACs active in 2012 than any other election over the past decade. Yet those PACs spent \$126 million, a 5 percent decrease from the 2010 gubernatorial election cycle. PACs typically dig deeper in gubernatorial election years to influence the elections of a bumper crop of statewide officeholders. 2012 PAC spending increased 6 percent over the preceding non-gubernatorial election in 2008.

PAC Spending Spikes in Gubernatorial Election Years

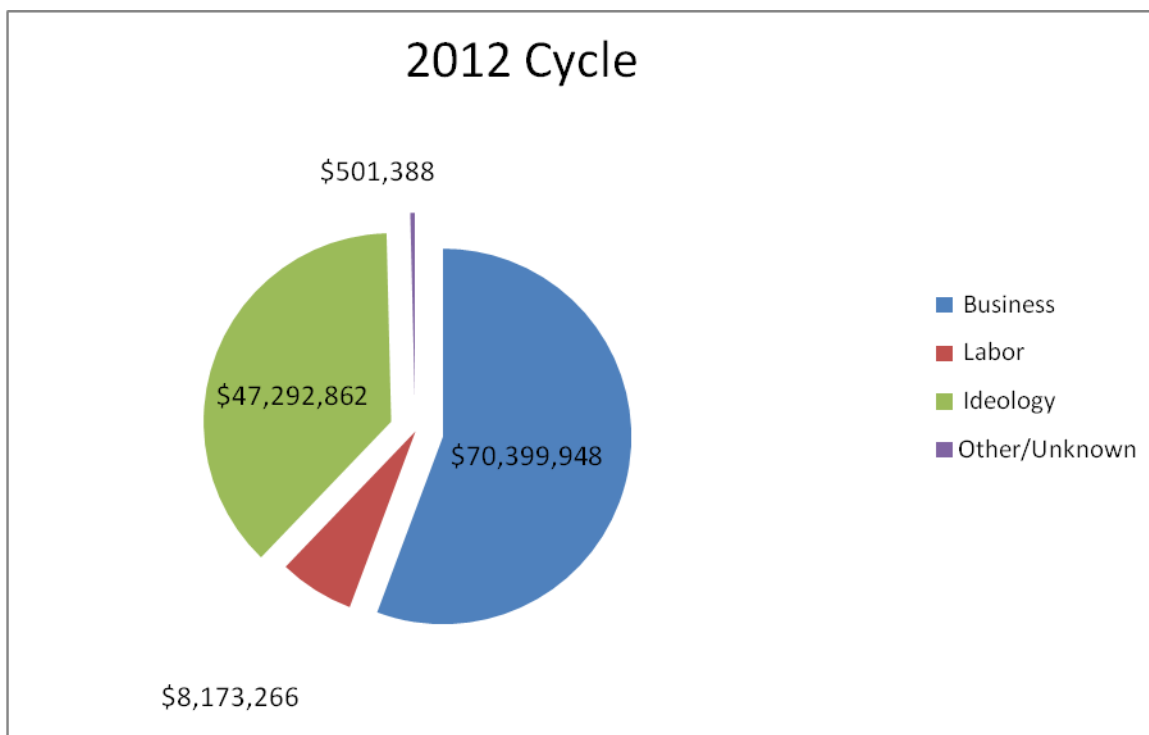


*Gubernatorial election cycle.

II. Business, Ideological & Labor PACs

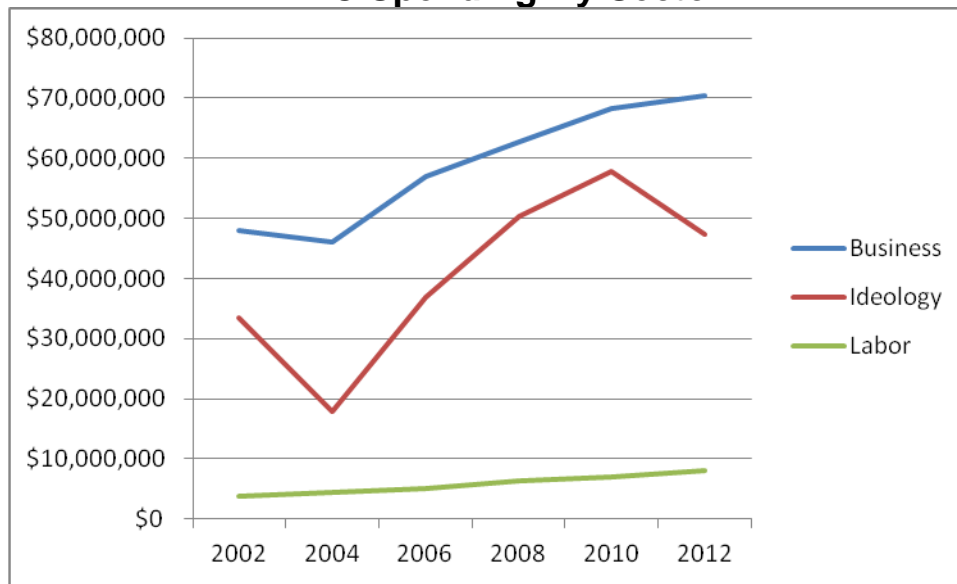
Business PACs spent \$70 million in the 2012 cycle, up 3 percent from what these PACs spent in the previous cycle. The Business sector accounted for a total of 56 percent of all PAC spending (the next section discusses Business PACs in depth). Meanwhile spending by Ideological and Single-Issue PACs contracted 18 percent from 2010 to 2012. The \$47 million that these PACs spent equaled 37 percent of PAC spending. Labor PACs increased their 2012 spending 16 percent to \$8 million. Labor PACs controlled just 6 percent of all PAC money. A single pro-business PAC, Texans for Lawsuit Reform, spent almost as much as the entire Labor PAC sector.

PAC Spending By Sector



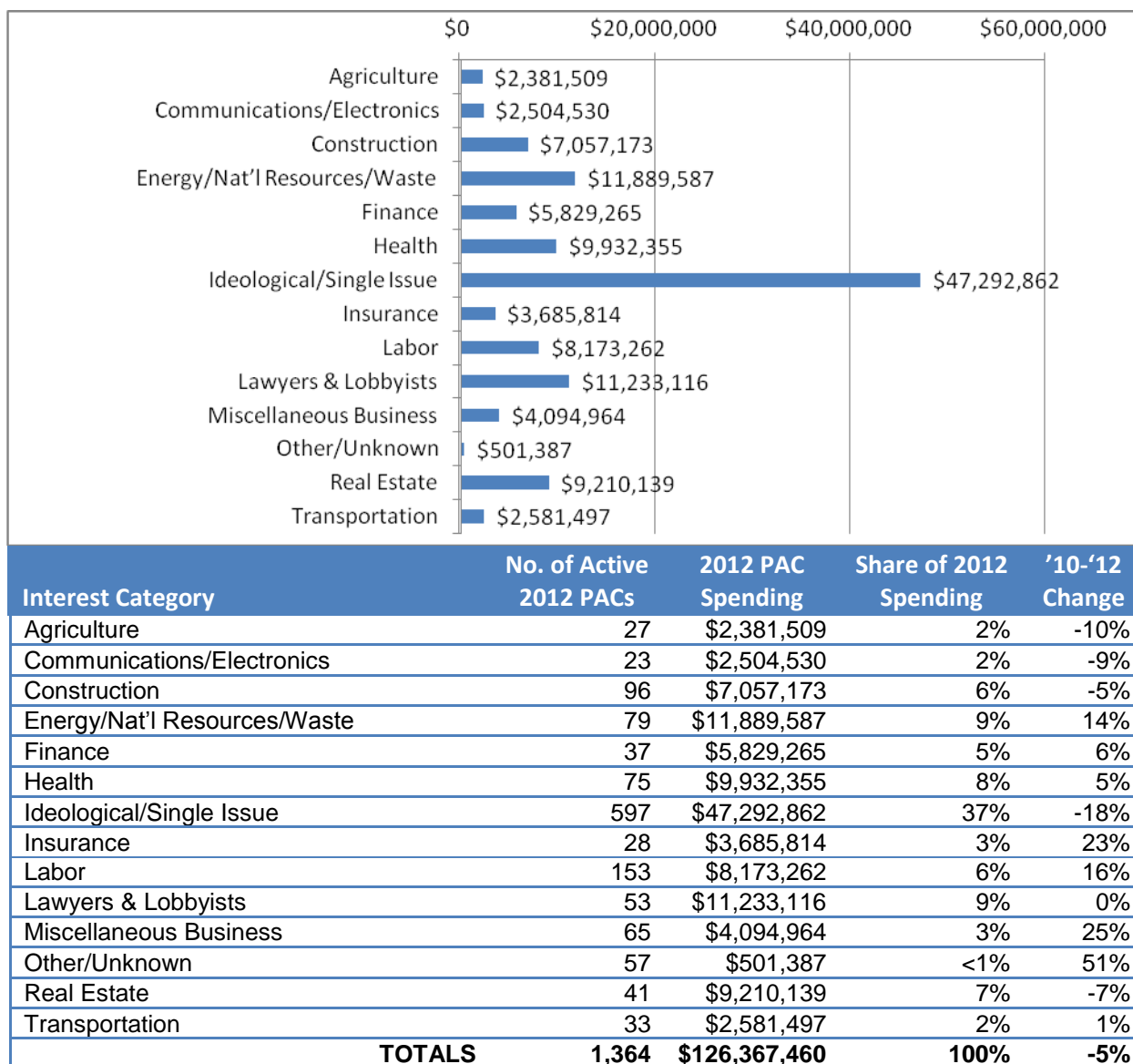
Sector	2004 Cycle	2006 Cycle	2008 Cycle	2010 Cycle	2012 Cycle	'10-'12 Growth
Business	\$46,088,137	\$57,034,732	\$62,741,376	\$68,235,849	\$70,399,948	3%
Ideology	\$17,789,167	\$37,003,210	\$50,403,265	\$57,847,226	\$47,292,862	-18%
Labor	\$4,512,391	\$5,116,613	\$6,307,456	\$7,032,134	\$8,173,262	16%
Other/Unknown	\$514,829	\$13,099	\$109,764	\$330,977	\$501,388	51%
TOTALS:	\$68,904,524	\$99,167,654	\$119,561,861	\$133,446,187	\$126,267,460	-5%

PAC Spending By Sector



III. Top Business PAC Categories

The \$70 million spent by Business PACs accounted for 56 percent of all PAC spending. This section focuses on the four top-spending Business sectors: Energy & Natural Resources, Lawyers & Lobbyists, Health and Real Estate.



Energy & Natural Resources

Fracking-engorged oil and gas companies helped make Energy & Natural Resources the No. 1 PAC-spending category. PACs in this sector spent \$11.9 million, up 14 percent from the 2010 cycle. As discussed at the end of this section, no other sector had more PACs that ranked among Texas' Fastest-Growing PACs. At the same time, data for some top energy PACs are misleading because they reported *national* political expenditures to the Texas Ethics Commission.

Top Energy & Natural Resources PACs

2012 Spending	PAC	2012 Rank	2010 Spending	'10-'12 Growth	2010 Rank
\$2,009,216	Valero Energy Corp.	9	\$2,411,557	-17%	10
\$916,550	Atmos Energy Corp.	19	\$436,351	110%	54
\$714,023	ConocoPhillips	30	\$803,451	-11%	25
\$561,533	NuStar	39	\$380,233	48%	63
\$561,425	CenterPoint Energy, Inc.	40	\$444,956	26%	50
\$545,693	Dow Chemical Co.	45	\$409,692	33%	58
\$473,000	Texas Oil & Gas PAC	52	\$400,748	18%	59
\$414,342	WCS – Waste Control Specialists	60			
\$393,000	American Electric Power	63	\$340,700	15%	73
\$355,201	El Paso Corp.	75	\$50,953	597%	368
\$342,313	Good Government Fund	83	\$269,000	27%	98
\$249,368	Lyondell Chemical Co.	113	\$58,800	324%	339
\$246,916	*Oncor Electric Delivery Admin. Corp.	115	\$18,487	1236%	611
\$232,012	Chesapeake	119	\$161,710	43%	157
\$219,774	NRG Energy, Inc.	123	\$146,622	50%	165
\$203,000	Rural Friends Of TX Electric Coops	133	\$189,970	7%	143
\$190,784	Spectra Energy Corp.	139	\$483,796	-61%	47
\$188,564	Phillips 66	141			
\$184,813	PSEL PAC	143	\$227,000	-19%	119
\$181,140	Occidental Petroleum Corp.	149	\$151,109	20%	161
\$171,070	Denbury Resources, Inc.	154	\$84,550	102%	265
\$171,030	*EFH Energy PAC	155	\$226,814	-25%	120
\$143,050	Apache Corp.	174	\$21,000	581%	581
\$126,255	*EFH Power PAC	189	\$134,969	-6%	180
\$122,326	Exxon Mobil Corp.	195	\$141,600	-14%	169
\$118,962	El Paso Electric Co.	200	\$63,475	87%	323
\$114,500	IPR-GDF SUEZ North America, Inc.	207	\$22,000	420%	570
\$110,000	Chevron	213	\$106,000	4%	221
\$107,600	Pioneer Natural Resources USA	216	\$20,500	425%	588
\$106,874	Energy Transfer Partners	219	\$8,619	1140%	796
\$105,550	*Oncor Electric Delivery Admin. Corp. TX	222	\$10,024	953%	769
\$105,222	Tenaska	223	\$98,250	7%	236
\$101,975	*EFH Employee PAC	226	\$116,535	-12%	203

*PACs affiliated with Texas Energy Future Holdings Corp. (EFH).

Lawmakers tackled major energy issues in 2013. The 2013 legislature reviewed the state agency that oversees the oil and gas industry. The misnamed Texas Railroad Commission is the ultimate captured agency. It is governed by three commissioners who are elected in \$1 million campaigns funded by the energy industry that they are supposed to regulate.² In the first quarter of fiscal 2013, agency inspectors wrote up almost 14,000 industry violations and meted out a grand total of less than \$200,000 in fines.³ Periodic [reviews of the agency](#) by Sunset Advisory Commission staff highlight such conflicts and recommend reforms, which industry-beholden legislators reject.⁴ The only 2013 reform that lawmakers approved would force Railroad Commissioners to resign before running for another office. Significantly, the industry quietly favored this restriction to stop upwardly mobile commissioners from shaking them down (the governor vetoed the [ethics bill](#) containing this reform).⁵



The energy industry is clashing with communities, businesses and farmers over water. Texas has not been up front about the fracking industry's powerful thirst. The [Texas Observer analyzed](#) industry data from three counties over South Texas' Eagle Ford Shale, finding that the industry there used 15,000 acre feet of water in 2012 (or the amount that 45,000 households use each year). In just those three counties, frackers reported that they already consume half the water that the Railroad Commission estimated that the entire 24-county Eagle Ford Shale area will use at peak production a decade from now.⁶ Frackers **Apache Corp.** and **Pioneer Natural Resources** ranked among 2012's fastest growing PACs. Both PACs dug deep for Railroad Commission candidates and Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst. Pioneer also heavily backed Straus and GOP congressional candidates.

With other states citing Texas' water shortage to counter Governor Rick Perry's efforts to recruit out-of-state businesses, Texas lawmakers have asked voters to approve a November proposition on a proposed \$2 billion loan fund for water projects.⁷ The plan replaces the part-time Texas Water Development Board with three gubernatorial appointees to control these funds.⁸ Most of the money is to be spent on dams and desalination plants rather than more cost-effective conservation projects. History suggests that energy companies will help sell this water plan to voters. In 2011 the **Texas Oil & Gas Association** and its members were the top funders of [H2O4Texas](#) PAC, which helped sell Texas voters on water-infrastructure bonds.

If the five large PACs tied to **Energy Future Holdings Corp.** (EFH) were combined into one PAC, it would be Texas' largest Energy PAC. During the 2012 cycle, five large EFH PACs (marked by asterisks in the accompanying table) spent more than \$750,000. Collectively the EFH PACs favored the state's top three politicians in the 2012 cycle, followed by Railroad Commissioner Barry Smitherman, an ex-gubernatorial appointee to the Public Utility Commission. EFH is the product of the \$45 billion purchase of TXU Corp. in 2007, history's largest leveraged buyout. That deal amounted to a bet that natural gas prices, which shape Texas electricity prices, would remain high. Instead, the fracking boom cratered gas prices, threatening EFH with bankruptcy. The governor's Public Utility Commissioners have aided EFH by promoting [higher](#) electricity prices, which they say are needed to prevent blackouts. In 2013 the Texas Medical Association also vainly urged state regulators to force EFH to clean up or close its biggest coal plants, which are the state's worst emitters of harmful sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and mercury.⁹

The regulated electric delivery arm of EFH operated two of 2012's fastest-growing PACs. Two **Oncor** PACs went from spending less than \$20,000 apiece in the 2010 cycle to a combined total of more than \$350,000 in 2012. It is not clear why the company runs Oncor PAC and Oncor Texas PAC separately, since both of them mostly back Texas state candidates. Collectively they gave \$21,000 to Speaker Straus and \$15,000 apiece to the governor and lieutenant governor. Oncor's favorite lawmakers were Rep. Byron Cook and Senators John Carona and Troy Fraser. **GDF Suez's** fast-growth electricity PAC gave most of its money to members of Congress, Railroad Commissioner Smitherman, General Abbott and Reps. Jim Pitts and Phil King.

San Antonio-based **Valero Energy Corp.** PAC spent 36 percent (\$729,413) of its \$2 million in its home state. This included contributions to Texas' congressional delegation, particularly Senator Ted Cruz. This refiner also gave \$27,500 to its favorite state official: Attorney General Greg Abbott. Abbott has filed many lawsuits against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.¹⁰ This includes the nation's first frivolous state lawsuit challenging EPA regulation of greenhouse-gas emissions from industrial sites, such as Valero's refineries.¹¹ Valero also gave \$26,000 to the Associated Republicans of Texas and \$20,000 to homeboy Speaker Joe Straus. Straus and Abbott also were favorites of **NuStar Energy**, the refining and asphalt company that Valero spun off in 2006. NuStar's biggest federal expenditure dropped \$50,000 into the black hole of David Dewhurst's U.S. Senate bid.

The PAC of Dallas-based **Atmos Energy Corp.** spent \$916,550, including 61 percent in its home state (\$563,270).¹² This gas utility gave \$35,000 to Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst, \$20,000 to Speaker Straus and \$11,000 or more to the Texas Pipeline Association and Railroad Commissioners Christi Craddick and Barry Smitherman. A WFAA-TV investigation implicated Atmos and the Railroad Commission in a cover-up of explosive pipeline couplings that appear to have killed five Texans. Under media pressure in 2007, the commission ordered Atmos to replace the couplings.¹³ The *Dallas Morning News* recently reported that the Texas Railroad Commission has repeatedly approved gas-rate hikes for Atmos and Houston-based **Centerpoint Energy**. Railroad Commissioners who recently took more than \$118,000 from these gas utilities helped boost Texas residential gas bills 7 percent in 2012, despite a gas boom yielding near-historic low gas prices.¹⁴

The industry formed the **Texas Pipeline Association PAC** after the Texas Railroad Commission ordered the replacement of faulty couplings. This PAC's top 2012 underwriters include Atmos, **Energy Transfer Partners** and **Spectra. Energy Transfer Partners** and **El Paso Corp.** (which Kinder Morgan acquired in 2012) rank among 2012's fastest-growing PACs. Energy Transfer's PAC gave most to the three Railroad Commissioners, the Speaker the Attorney General and to the Texas Pipeline Association. El Paso Corp. PAC gave mostly to congressional candidates. Pipeline companies face mounting skepticism over their long-held powers to invoke eminent domain to seize private land for pipelines, a power upheld by Texas courts.¹⁵ A 2013 bill, [HB 3547](#), sought to require pipeline companies seeking to condemn land to defend their common-carrier status before an administrative law judge and to certify that other companies would use at least 10 percent of the line's volume.¹⁶

Oklahoma-based **ConocoPhillips**' PAC spent \$714,023, dropping \$221,010 in Texas. ConocoPhillips bought into North Texas' Barnett Shale with its 2006 acquisition of Burlington Resources. It gave heavily to Railroad Commissioners, led by Barry Smitherman.

Dow Chemical PAC also spent more than \$500,000, though it invested only about \$150,000 in Texas state campaigns. Its biggest state expenditure was a \$15,000 contribution to H204Texas PAC's promotion of water-project bonds. Dow's PAC gave \$3,000 or more to the state's top leaders. This PAC also gave \$2,000 to Comptroller Susan Combs, who oversees a program that lets the chemical giant dodge tens of millions of dollars in property-tax payments to Texas schools.¹⁷

The \$250,000 spent by **Lyondell Chemical PAC** put it among 2012's fastest-growing PACs. This PAC gave \$10,000 to Straus and \$5,000 to Perry. Federally, it gave the American Chemical Council PAC and National Republican Senatorial Committee \$10,000 apiece, followed by \$6,500 to Dewhurst's U.S. Senate campaign.

To keep reaping lucrative favors from Texas officials, billionaire Harold Simmons' **Waste Control Specialists** established WCS PAC in 2011. WCS PAC initially operated illegally by doling out money from a lone billionaire. Texas PACs must collect money from at least 10 donors before they can bankroll campaigns. To comply, WCS paid a [fine](#) and rounded up nine more contributors. This PAC's favorite politician was Republican Rep. Drew Darby, who introduced a 2013 bill to exclusively benefit Waste Control's low-level nuclear waste dump in West Texas. The [Darby bill](#) sought to squelch litigation filed by Waste Control neighbors in New Mexico and invited WCS to almost double the amount of radioactive curies that the dump can import each year. Although this bill foundered, lawmakers sharply [boosted](#) the amount of radioactivity that WCS can bring into Texas.

Fast-Growth PACs

Percent Growth	2012 Spending	2010 Spending	PAC Name	Interest Category	2012 Rank
442,798%	\$428,548	\$97	TX Organizing Project TOP PAC	Ideological/Single Issue	58
8,506%	\$363,173	\$4,220	Compass Bancshares, Inc.	Finance	71
7,682%	\$787,591	\$10,121	Maverick PAC Texas	Ideological/Single Issue	25
1,552%	\$216,616	\$13,113	Coca-Cola Refreshments USA	Miscellaneous Business	124
1,236%	\$246,916	\$18,487	Oncor	Energy/Nat'l Resources	115
1,192%	\$316,655	\$24,500	Comerica, Inc.	Finance	94
1,140%	\$106,874	\$8,619	Energy Transfer Partners Texas	Energy/Nat'l Resources	219
1,139%	\$294,200	\$23,750	KBR, Inc.	Construction	103
953%	\$105,550	\$10,024	Oncor TX State PAC	Energy/Nat'l Resources	222
625%	\$116,849	\$16,125	TX Assn. of Business & Commerce	Miscellaneous Business	204
597%	\$355,201	\$50,953	El Paso Corp.	Energy/Nat'l Resources	75
581%	\$143,050	\$21,000	Apache Corp.	Energy/Nat'l Resources	174
425%	\$107,600	\$20,500	Pioneer Natural Resources USA	Energy/Nat'l Resources	216
420%	\$114,500	\$22,000	IPR-GDF SUEZ North America	Energy/Nat'l Resources	207
384%	\$415,900	\$85,974	Citizen Leader PAC	Ideological/Single Issue	59
352%	\$1,157,974	\$256,303	First Tuesday	Ideological/Single Issue	13
324%	\$249,368	\$58,800	Lyondell Chemical Co.	Energy/Nat'l Resources	113
310%	\$169,505	\$41,348	Real Estate Council Of Austin	Real Estate	157
234%	\$381,604	\$114,318	Texas Events PAC	Miscellaneous Business	65
203%	\$112,396	\$37,050	Austin Police Association	Labor	210

The list of Texas' 20 Fastest-Growing PACs has twice as many Energy & Natural Resources PACs than those of any other sector. The Energy, Real Estate and Ideological sections discuss many fast-growth PACs. Two fast-growth Finance PACs had a federal focus. Birmingham-based **CompassBanshares** PAC gave the most money to the National Republican Senatorial Committee, Senator Ted Cruz and GOP Alabama Supreme Court candidates Chuck Malone and Tommy Bryan. Compass also ran a smaller Texas state PAC that favored General Abbott, Governor Perry, Speaker Straus and Texans for Lawsuit Reform. **Comerica** Bank's PAC also favored congressional campaigns. Although the Texas Enterprise Fund awarded Comerica \$3.5 million to move its headquarters from Detroit to Dallas in 2007, Comerica's largest PAC contributions still went to Michigan's MiBank PAC and to Michigan Rep. Bill Huizenga. This PAC also gave \$5,000 to Enterprise Fund overseer David Dewhurst.

Coca-Cola Refreshments USA PAC ballooned alongside efforts to limit obesity by restricting soda. This PAC's biggest investment was in Vermont Democratic Governor Peter Shumlin, who recently denounced soda-tax proposals for being regressive (Shumlin is as progressive as diabetes). Coca-Cola PAC also gave heavily to an Ohio soda trade group and the Republican Party of California and Arizona. It spent \$16,000 in Texas, where lawmakers passed a 2013 bill to ban soda sales in public schools. The Coke PAC gave \$1,000 to Governor Perry soon after he vetoed the soda ban.

The fast-growth **Texas Association of Business & Commerce (TAB) PAC** invested almost \$90,000 in Speaker Joe Strauss. TAB's biggest PAC contributors include Waste Control Specialists PAC, Houston homebuilder Bob Perry and two predatory-lender interests: the Texas Consumer Lenders PAC and Cash Store owner Trevor Ahlberg. TAB boss Bill Hammond opposed efforts to rein in payday lenders in 2013, when even most modest reforms crashed and burned in the Straus-led House.

The expanding **Texas Events PAC** doles out money from cutting-horse and quarter-horse interests that are subsidized by taxpayers. The state's Events Trust Funds subsidize sports and business events by tapping projected sales-tax increases. Texas Events PAC notably gave \$15,000 to Texas Comptroller Susan Combs, who oversees Events Trust Funds. House members killed a 2013 bill to audit the Events Trust Funds.

Fast-growth **KBR PAC** mostly gave to Congressional candidates at a time when its U.S. military contracts in the Middle East finally may peak. This Houston Metro Transit Authority contractor also gave \$10,000 to Keep Metro Moving Forward (see Ideological & Single-Issue PACs).

Lawyers & Lobbyists

No. 2-ranked Lawyers & Lobbyists PACs spent \$11.2 million, barely nosing out what this sector spent in the preceding cycle. Plaintiff interests operated this sector's two fattest PACs, which spent more than \$1 million apiece (the Ideological section also discusses major PACs financed by trial lawyers). Corporate interests backed all but one of the other leading Lawyers & Lobbyists PACs. There were no major tort bills in 2013 and so many pro-business liability laws have passed that plaintiff and defense lawyers in Texas find little left to quibble over.¹⁸

Texans for Insurance Reform (TIR) spent \$2.9 million (10 percent less than the previous cycle). It raised 60 percent of this cash from four plaintiff firms (Mostyn Law Firm, Nix Patterson & Roach, Watts Guerra Craft and Williams Kherkher Hart & Boundas). TIR's most expensive races choked. It spent close to \$1 million trying to preserve moderate Republican Senator Jeff Wentworth, whom conservative Donna Campbell demolished. TIR spent \$500,000 on moderate Republican Todd Smith, whom conservative Kelly Hancock whooped in a senate primary. It spent \$350,000 on Democrat David Norman, whose Senate bid was shredded by Steve-Mostyn [nemesis](#) Larry Taylor. TIR lost more than \$100,000 on powdered-wig-sounding Democrat John Adams, who failed to topple Republican Rep. Jason Isaac.

Boosting its spending to \$1.1 million, the Texas Trial Lawyers Association (TTLA) PAC notched more victories than TIR. Houston attorney Tony Buzbee was TTLA's top sugar daddy, giving more than \$200,000. Donations dropped sharply thereafter, with Beaumont attorney Jason Byrd contributing more than \$13,000. TTLA spent \$48,000 helping Democrat Joe Moody defeat Republican Rep. Dee Margo and gave \$35,000 to Democratic Senator Chuy Hinojosa. It spent \$35,000 apiece helping Democrat Philip Cortez take out Republican Rep. John Garza and lost that same amount on Democrat Yvonne Gonzalez Toureilles' challenge to GOP Rep. J.M. Lozano.

Top Lawyers & Lobbyists PACs

2012 Spending	PAC	2012 Rank	2010 Spending	'10-'12 Growth	2010 Rank
\$2,896,376	Texans for Insurance Reform	4	\$3,200,598	-10%	8
\$1,104,824	TX Trial Lawyers Assn.	15	\$1,032,840	7%	20
\$972,279	HillCo PAC	18	\$885,453	10%	23
\$607,551	Andrews & Kurth	36	\$645,287	-6%	34
\$556,404	Fulbright & Jaworski	42	\$661,950	-16%	32
\$537,793	Vinson & Elkins	46	\$779,949	-31%	26
\$442,601	Haynes & Boone	57	\$334,300	32%	75
\$381,550	Winstead PC	66	\$416,882	-8%	57
\$351,811	K & L Gates LLP	78	\$394,047	-11%	61
\$340,594	Bracewell & Giuliani	84	\$255,650	33%	106
\$323,363	Jackson Walker	90	\$242,316	33%	112
\$321,937	Baker Botts	91	\$327,774	-2%	76
\$252,398	Balance PAC	111			
\$210,028	Greenberg Traurig	127	\$224,247	-6%	121
\$199,438	Gardere Wynne Sewell LLP	135	\$232,906	-14%	114
\$184,718	HS Law: Hance Scarborough	144	\$76,530	141%	282

Operating this sector's biggest corporate PAC, **HillCo Partners** increased spending 10 percent to almost \$1 million. HillCo PAC took 61 percent of this money from two longtime lobby clients: homebuilder Bob Perry and Dallas Cowboys owner Jerral Jones. This PAC gave \$65,000 to General Abbott, \$49,000 to Governor Perry and \$42,500 to Comptroller Combs. Overseeing the state's Major Events Fund, Combs awarded the Cowboys \$27 million to host the 2011 NFL Super Bowl. [Critics charged](#) that Combs based this payout on a turnout estimate that was almost seven times the number of fans who actually entered Cowboys Stadium during the Super Bowl.

Andrews & Kurth ran the largest corporate law PAC, spending more than \$600,000. The PAC gave \$50,000 to General Abbott and \$25,000 to Harris County Attorney Vince Ryan. It gave heavily to judicial candidates, led by \$15,000 to Supreme Court Justice Don Willett. Justice Willett has both [denounced](#) and mastered Texas' troubled judicial-selection system, wherein justices run million-dollar campaigns bankrolled by lawyers and litigants with cases before their court. Andrew & Kurth PAC also contributed \$12,500 to promote several Houston bond initiatives.

Fulbright & Jaworski and **Vinson & Elkins** both surpassed \$500,000 in PAC spending, with each giving General Abbott at least \$50,000. These two firms also financed judges that they practice before, led by Supreme Court justices.

Houston attorneys started the new **Balance PAC** in the 2012 cycle. Its top contributors included the corporate defense firms Ware Jackson Lee & Chambers and Vinson & Elkins, as well as the plaintiff firms Doyle Raizner and the Matthews Firm. Balance PAC's biggest expenditures went into focus groups, surveys and polling data, some of which it donated to Democratic First Tuesday and Texans for America's Future PACs (see the Ideological section). Balance PAC contributed advertizing and polling data to 18 local Democratic judicial candidates. Thirteen of them won by margins of two percent or less. The other five lost by similar margins.



Storm-Chasing Nemeses:
Trial lawyer Steve Mostyn
and Senator Larry Taylor.



Health

Raw Texas Ethics Commission data suggest that Health PACs *doubled* their 2012 spending to almost \$19 million, with McAllen-based **Border Health PAC** erroneously reporting a stunning expenditure of \$11 million. Tied to the Doctor's Hospital at Renaissance, this PAC's biggest expense was a single rent payment exceeding \$9 million. Border Health's director told TPJ that this was a "typo" and the actual rent payment was just \$1,331. Given that \$1,331 bears little in common with \$9,062,012, TPJ believes that the PAC may have inadvertently processed this payment through the hospital's patient billing system, triggering the usual, obscene mark ups. Correcting the error, Border Health spent just over \$2 million—an amount that surpassed the powerful Texas Medical Association. Overall, Health PACs spent almost \$10 million, a 5 percent increase from 2010.

A 2009 *New Yorker* article about McAllen's runaway health costs featured Doctor's Hospital at Renaissance. The city trails the nation in household income yet spends almost twice the national average on its Medicare enrollees.¹⁹ McAllen also is off the charts in the number of specialist visits and medical tests generated per Medicare patient. The article attributed these numbers to the entrepreneurial spirit of local doctors, many of whom refer patients to the physician-owned Doctors Hospital at Renaissance or other doctor-owned facilities.

Border Health gave to dozens of state candidates of both parties. It gave \$200,000 to McAllen native son Senator Juan 'Chuy' Hinojosa and \$125,000 to Governor Perry. The governor, whose [sister lobbies](#) for a company that invests in doctor-owned medical facilities, strongly backs doctor-owned facilities. Border Health also gave \$100,000 apiece to Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst and General Abbott and \$75,000 to Speaker Straus.

Top Health PACs

2012 Spending	PAC	2012 Rank	2010 Spending	'10-'12 Growth	2010 Rank
\$2,070,373	Border Health PAC	8	\$2,237,754	-7%	13
\$1,692,899	TX Medical Assn.	12	\$1,323,806	28%	18
\$744,679	TX Optometric PAC	27	\$546,025	36%	42
\$555,019	TX Dental Assn.	44	\$570,251	-3%	38
\$368,188	TX Society of Anesthesiologists	67	\$358,284	3%	68
\$319,887	TX Assn. for Home Care & Hospice	92	\$287,588	11%	91
\$296,607	Mednax, Inc.	100	\$202,014	47%	130
\$296,341	TX Hospital Assn.	101	\$195,020	52%	137
\$246,750	TX Health Care Assn.	116	\$251,000	-2%	109
\$207,365	TX Pharmacy Assn.	130	\$205,306	1%	128
\$194,586	TX Ophthalmological Assn.	136	\$107,034	82%	219
\$177,775	Friends of Baylor Med	151	\$149,800	19%	163
\$159,500	Webster Surgical Specialty Hospital	163			
\$157,197	TX Radiological Society	166	\$212,302	-26%	125
\$147,776	Blue Cross & Blue Shield of TX	173	\$118,398	25%	200
\$136,618	HCA TX	177	\$114,014	20%	207
\$134,000	Heart Place	181	\$193,400	-31%	138
\$128,000	Dental Group Practice	186			
\$126,057	Harden Healthcare LLC	190			
\$124,750	Centene Corp.	193	\$105,592	18%	222
\$118,343	Southwestern Research & Medical	202	\$106,750	11%	220

Congress and President Obama have restricted doctor-owned facilities, arguing that they drive up health costs. Lawmakers in Texas, which leads the nation in doctor-owned facilities, have little stomach for such measures. Two other major PACs advocate doctor-owned facilities: the newly formed **Webster Surgical Specialty Hospital PAC** and **Heart Place** (whose PAC treasurer wrote a [journal article](#) promoting doctor-owned hospitals). Members of the **Texas Radiological Society** are split over the propriety of radiologists referring patients to proprietary scanning facilities.²⁰



Gubernatorial sister, Milla Perry Jones, lobbies for United Surgical Partners.

In its No. 1 Health problem, Texas has the nation's worst insurance rate, with 26 percent of Texas residents under age 65 uninsured.²¹ The "Obamacare" federal health reform addresses this problem by offering \$100 billion in federal funds to expand Medicaid to cover up to 1.5 million more Texans. This \$100 billion would benefit the politically weak uninsured, as well as the powerful Health industry.

In the anti-Obamacare legislature, Houston physician and Republican Rep. John Zerwas spent the 2013 session trying to craft a face-saving "Texas solution" that would allow Texas to take Obamacare money without appearing to endorse Obamacare. [HB 3791](#) would solicit a state block grant to let Texas claim it was going its own way (even as the state left it to the Feds to establish Texas' Obamacare-mandated [insurance exchange](#)). One Texas Public Policy Foundation representative testified against the Zerwas bill, while [30 witnesses](#) endorsed it, including the conservative Texas Association of Business. Rep. Zerwas said his bill faced two insurmountable obstacles. Some politicians, including the veto-wielding governor, opposed any increased spending on Medicaid, while other members feared that their primary opponents would brand them as "Obamacare facilitators."²²

Wielding a \$1.8 million PAC, the **Texas Medical Association** (TMA) endorsed the Zerwas bill. Yet TMA's [newsletter covering the 2013 session](#) buried this failure under lesser victories that cut bureaucracy, make insurance markets more transparent, fund medical education and protect physicians' share of the health market. One TMA [victory](#) prevents insurance companies that negotiate discounted doctor rates from independently selling or leasing those rates to others. That bill passed with the support of insurer **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas**. TMA's favorite politicians all are physicians. The PAC gave more than \$100,000 to Rep. Greg Bonnen and to Mark Shelton's failed senate bid. It gave \$40,000 or more to Rep. Charles Schwertner and Senator Robert Deuell. Its favorite politician without a medical degree was moderate Republican Rep. Todd Smith, who lost a 2012 senate race to [insurance-industry favorite](#) Kelly Hancock.

One doctor turf war pits ophthalmologists against optometrists, who want to independently manage glaucoma, expand prescriptive privileges and operate corrective lasers. During the 2012 cycle the **Texas Optometric PAC** outspent the **Texas Ophthalmological Association PAC** almost 4:1 and TPJ researchers noticed a surge in campaign contributions by individual optometrists. Yet ophthalmologists also are backed by the TMA's fire power. The optometrists' main 2013 [victory](#) prohibits insurers from forcing contracted optometrists to discount services not covered by their corresponding health plans (such as spare eye glasses or cosmetic contact lenses).²³ In a microcosm of the eye-guy wars, the Optometric PAC gave \$265,000 (36 percent of its war chest) to Dallas optometrist Steve Nguyen. Nguyen lost a Republican runoff to new Rep. Bennett Ratliff, who received the ophthalmological PAC's biggest contribution (\$31,000). The Optometric PAC also gave \$20,000 to Senator John Carona, who wrote the bill protecting optometrists from insurers.

The **Texas Dental Association** has long labored to expand dental coverage by insurance companies. Recently the Texas dental profession has been marred by reports of massive [Medicaid fraud](#), with Texas Medicaid spending more on braces in 2010 than all the other states combined. Some dentists attributed this and other abuses to corporate "dental service organizations" dictating unsafe, profit-maximizing practices. A failed 2013 [bill](#) sought

to subject these dental companies to regulation and disciplinary review, a policy [advocated](#) by the Texas Dental Association, which gave from \$25,000 to \$30,000 to each of the Big Three. Revolving-door lobbyist Jaime Capelo formed a new PAC in 2012 that appears to represent dental service organizations. **Dental Group Practice** PAC took most of its money from dental companies based outside Texas, including Modern Dental Professionals of California and Illinois-based Heartland Dental Care. This PAC wrote its biggest checks to Governor Perry, Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst and Senator Jane Nelson, who wrote the failed bill to rein in dental service organizations.

The **Texas Health Care Association**, which represents nursing homes such as those owned by **Harden Healthcare** (which recently formed its new PAC), and the **Texas Association for Home Care & Hospice** have fought in recent sessions to increase Medicaid reimbursements.²⁴ Both trade groups gave heavily to House Appropriations Chair Jim Pitts and to Senator Bob Deuell. Dr. Deuell authored a 2013 euthanasia [bill](#). Texas doctors currently can stop medically futile treatment unless that would violate the wishes of patients or their families, who have 10 days to find a likeminded provider. Deuell's bill would have euthanasia opponents with their appeals and given them four more days to find a new provider.²⁵ This measure died despite the support of the Texas Alliance for Life, the Texas Medical Association, Texas Health Care Association, the **Texas Hospital Association** and some hospice interests. Opposing the bill was Texas Right to Life, which advocates pulling the plug on euthanasia.²⁶

Friends of Baylor Med PAC and **Southwestern Research and Medical PAC** promote medical teaching and research institutions tied to the scandal-plagued Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT). Baylor and Southwestern both helped establish the disastrous Statewide Clinical Trials Network of Texas (CTNet). After receiving a record \$25 million CPRIT grant, [CTNet folded in 2013](#) as CPRIT tried to recover funds that CTNet squandered on lavish and inappropriate expenses. CPRIT, which recruited its first chief scientific officer from Southwestern, violated its own protocols to improperly steer an \$11 million grant to [Peloton Therapeutics](#), a private venture launched at Southwestern with funding from a major GOP donor.²⁷

Real Estate

Forty-one Real Estate PACs spent almost \$9.2 million, down 7 percent from the 2010 cycle. The **Texas Association of Realtors** (TAR) and its sister **Texas Association of Realtors Issues Mobilization PAC** collectively spent \$6.5 million. Combined, these two PACs would rank as Texas' No. 2 PAC after Texans for Lawsuit Reform PAC. These twin TAR PACs together accounted for 71 cents of every Real Estate PAC dollar.

TAR PAC sunk more than \$250,000 into the short-lived **Texans for Responsible Government PAC** (see "Specific-Purpose PACs"), which got 88 percent of its money from TAR PAC. Texans for Responsible Government's sole purpose was to rub out incumbent Rep. Wayne Christian. Bombarded by this ant-Christian PAC, Rep. Christian narrowly lost the GOP primary to Chris Paddie (who collected \$35,000 from TAR PAC). TAR PAC also spent an insufficient \$123,866 on web ads promoting Rep. Mike "Tuffy" Hamilton. Redistricting fatally pitted Hamilton into a GOP primary against Rep. James White, a Tea Party-backed African-American.²⁸ TAR PAC gave \$75,000 apiece to Speaker Straus and to Senator Jeff Wentworth's failed reelection campaign. It also gave \$50,000 to Governor Perry, who has made a personal fortune in real estate speculation.²⁹

TAR PAC redistributed money between local Realtors PACs. It received hefty contributions from the San Antonio Board of Realtors, while heavily subsidizing the **MetroTex Association of Realtors** (which reported nary a contribution in 2012). TAR clashed with developers in 2011 over two big issues. It backed efforts to curb the powers of anti-consumer homeowners associations. And it sought to prevent developers from recording deeds that perversely entitle builders to a percentage of the proceeds of a home's future sale. TAR also opposed taxing Realtors' fees and the mandatory disclosure of property sales prices (a reform sought by county appraisers). TAR promoted more limits on government seizures of land through eminent domain.

Fueled by Texas Association of Realtors corporate funds, the TAR Issues Mobilization PAC spent heavily promoting state and local issues. It spent more than \$200,000 promoting Proposition 2. That 2011 constitutional amendment authorized up to \$6 billion in state bonds for water-supply projects that enable urban sprawl (TAR Issues PAC also backed the related [H2O4Texas PAC](#)). TAR Issues PAC spent almost \$16,000 helping pass a 2011 initiative to [fold Bexar Metropolitan Water District](#) into the San Antonio Water System. It spent about \$50,000 promoting enactment of a 2011 [law](#) that shields Realtors from the Deceptive Trade Practices Act. It spent a comparable amount supporting Austin City Council measures to [regulate](#) short-term real estate rentals. It spent \$25,000 on a study of the economic benefits of eliminating property taxes. This Issues PAC sunk almost \$7,000 promoting a beltway around New Braunfels. It contributed \$5,000 to [Texas Employers for Immigration Reform](#), a business group favoring liberal immigration.

Top Real Estate PACs

2012 Spending	PAC	2012 Rank	2010 Spending	'10-'08 Growth	2010 Rank
\$4,840,375	TX Assn. of Realtors PAC	2	\$3,557,489	36%	4
\$1,736,228	TX Assn. of Realtors Issues Mobilization	11	\$3,238,317	-46%	6
\$567,225	TX Apartment Assn.	38	\$566,250	0%	39
\$316,365	Houston Realty Business Coalition	96	\$192,333	64%	139
\$258,783	Houston Apartment Assn.	110	\$264,443	-2%	101
\$184,550	MetroTex Assn. of Realtors	145	\$139,208	33%	172
\$183,316	Apartment Assn. of Greater Dallas	147	\$183,500	0%	145
\$169,505	Real Estate Council of Austin	157	\$41,348	310%	406
\$124,403	Boma Advocacy Committee	194	\$45,933	171%	386
\$120,061	Real Estate Council PAC	198	\$64,825	85%	317

The **Texas Apartment Association** was the only other real estate PAC to spend more than \$500,000. It funneled money from local apartment associations to state politicians. The Apartment Association gave \$25,000 apiece to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker, comptroller and attorney general. It cut \$7,500 checks to Senators John Carona, Glenn Hegar, Robert Nichols and Tommy Williams. A major achievement of this PAC was helping to enact a [2013 measure](#) allowing apartment owners to cut off their tenants' power if they do not pay their electricity bills. Apartment Association chapters in Houston and Dallas funneled money to the state PAC, while trying to influence local races. The Houston PAC gave \$10,000 to Houston Mayor Annise Parker and \$5,000 to conservative City Councilman Mike Sullivan, who got elected Harris County Tax Collector. This PAC also backed the failed Council reelection campaign of Realtor Brenda Stardig. The Greater Dallas chapter gave \$10,000 to Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings and favored Republican legislative candidates from the Metroplex area.

The **Houston Realty Business Coalition** meets at the Houston Junior League and spends heavily to endorse a slate of pro-business candidates for state and local offices. It collected \$20,000 or more from the late homebuilder Bob Perry, as well as commercial developers Dick Weekley and Alan Hassenflu.

The **Real Estate Council of Austin Business** PAC (No. 27574) ranks as one of 2012's fastest-growing PACs. It paid \$53,000 to Yates Consulting, gave \$6,500 Sen. Kirk Watson and contributed \$5,000 apiece to Sen. Jeff Wentworth, Rep. Paul Workman and Travis County Commissioner Gerald Daugherty. The related **Real Estate Council of Austin Business** Good Government PAC (No. 27579) spent almost \$100,000. It gave \$50,000 to Keep Austin Healthy PAC, which promoted a Central Health Board initiative to start an Austin teaching hospital.



A Realtor PAC spent \$250,000 evicting Wayne Christian from the House.

IV. Ideological & Single-Issue PACs

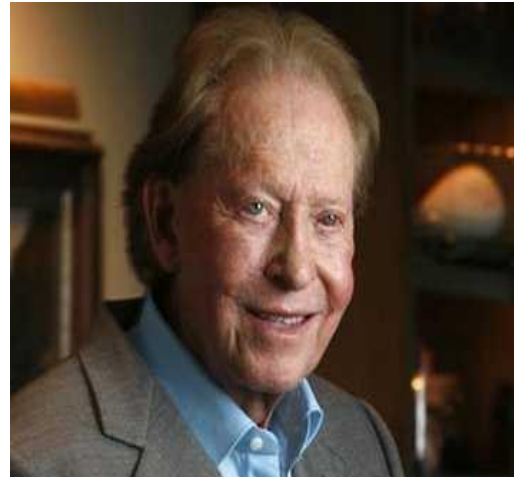
Spending by Ideological and Single-Issue PACs plummeted 18 percent from \$58 million in 2010 to \$47 million in 2012, accounting for 37 percent of all PAC spending. Meanwhile the number of Ideological and Single-Issue PACs that spent more than \$1 million dwindled from 12 to eight. Partisanship drove most of the top Ideological PACs. Their ranks included 10 Democratic and 13 Republican committees. Liberal and Democratic PACs also are disproportionately represented on the list of 2012's fastest-shrinking PACs at the end of this section.

Texas' No. 1 PAC, **Texans for Lawsuit Reform** (TLR), spent \$7.8 million to limit the legal liabilities of its wealthy donors, led by nuclear waste kingpin Harold Simmons (who gave TLR \$1 million this cycle). Over 20 years TLR has put the Texas civil justice system so firmly [in the hands of business interests](#) that TLR leaders have begun focusing on education policy.³⁰ TLR gave candidates \$4.6 million in 2012, with 92 percent benefitting Republicans. TLR sunk more than \$800,000 into Mark Shelton's failed showdown with Democratic Senator Wendy Davis and more than \$750,000 into Elizabeth Ames Jones' failed challenge to Senator Jeff Wentworth. It then spent more than \$250,000 helping Donna Campbell beat Wentworth in a Republican runoff. In other big GOP plays it spent \$463,393 on Rep. James White and lost \$356,481 on Raul David Pineda's House bid. The top Democratic recipients of TLR cash were failed House candidates Carlos Vasquez (\$99,714) and Delicia Herrera (\$51,500) and House winners Marisa Marquez (\$44,328) and Ryan Guillen (\$30,025).

Top Ideological & Single-Issue PACs

2012 Spending	PAC (partisan orientation)	2012 Rank	2010 Rank	'10-'12 Growth
\$7,824,875	Texans For Lawsuit Reform	1	1	17%
\$3,544,156	Associated Republicans of TX (R)	3	7	9%
\$2,767,368	Republican State Leadership Committee (R)	5	14	60%
\$2,725,517	Annie's List (D)	6	11	14%
\$2,564,357	Republican Party of TX (R)	7	12	10%
\$1,745,017	Texas Democratic Party (D)	10	5	-49%
\$1,157,974	First Tuesday (D)	13	105	352%
\$1,032,175	House Democratic Campaign Committee (D)	16	9	-63%
\$858,791	Conservative Republicans of TX (R)	20	24	-1%
\$837,941	ActBlue Texas (D)	21	15	-45%
\$790,755	TX Repub. Representatives Campaign Com. (R)	24	78	145%
\$787,591	Maverick PAC Texas (R)	25	765	7,682%
\$757,651	TX Federation of Republican Women (R)	26	30	11%
\$670,239	Travis County Democratic Party (D)	33	29	-8%
\$568,739	Vote Texas (D)	37	71	61%
\$527,330	Back to Basics (D)	48	3	-87%
\$493,051	Conservative Voters of TXs (R)	50		
\$466,939	TX House Leadership Fund (R)	53	37	-20%
\$464,354	Keep Metro Moving Forward	55		
\$453,682	Texans for America's Future (D)	56		
\$428,548	TOP PAC (D)	58	1275	442,798%
\$415,900	Citizen Leader PAC (R)	59	262	3844%
\$402,580	Texas Parent PAC	61	148	133%
\$399,435	Texans for Economic Development	62	28	-45 %
\$367,004	Conservative Republicans of Harris Co. (R)	68	144	96%
\$361,731	Hispanic Republicans of Texas (R)	73	99	35%
\$352,358	Empower Texans (Texans for Fiscal Resp.) (R)	77		

The Washington-based **Republican State Leadership Committee** (RSLC) influences state races nationwide. In 2012 Karl Rove's American Crossroads provided RSLC PAC's biggest inflow (\$1.35 million) followed by \$475,000 from Missouri government-spending critic Rex Sinquefeld, who has his own money managing issues.³¹ RSLC also reported \$250,000 apiece from Houston homebuilder Bob Perry and Missouri mystery donor A. Henson. Much of RSLC's contributions fly below the radar, moving through other PACs. In 2012 it gave \$300,000 to the Texas Republican Representatives Campaign Committee, \$250,000 to Associated Republicans of Texas and \$100,000 apiece to Texans for Lawsuit Reform and Texans for Honesty (see "Specific-Purpose PACs"). It also gave more than \$90,000 to Attorney General Greg Abbott.



Oozing toxic and nuclear liabilities, Harold Simmons gave Texans for Lawsuit Reform \$1 million.

Annie's List spent \$2.7 million in an effort to elect more Democratic women lawmakers. It contributed a little more than \$1 million to such candidates, with almost two-thirds of it going to winners. In its biggest investment, Annie's List gave more than \$420,000 to victorious Senator Wendy Davis. Its next-largest contribution of more than \$100,000 went to Tina Torres, who lost the Democratic primary to new Rep. Philip Cortez. Trial lawyer Steve Mostyn and his firm gave Annie's List more than \$400,000. The PAC's No. 2 backer was Bonanza Oil's Lee & Amy Fikes.

The **Republican Party of Texas** spent \$2.6 million. It collected more than \$300,000 from the Harris County Republican Party, \$130,000 from Harold Simmons and \$125,000 from homebuilder Bob Perry. This party PAC invested the most money in the winning House races of Reps. Anthony Dale (\$117,000) and Jason Isaac (\$79,000). Its biggest losers were failed legislative candidates Wayne Faircloth and Mark Shelton.

The **Texas Democratic Party** spent \$1.7 million. Its biggest outlay went into Keith Hampton's failed challenge to scandal-scarred Court of Criminal Appeals Presiding Judge Sharon Keller. The party's next-largest expenditures went into two losing and seven winning Senate races, headlined by Wendy Davis. The party's biggest underwriter was the Watts Law Firm, which gave \$350,000.

Once dependent on the now-withered Texas Democratic Trust, **First Tuesday** ranked among 2012's fastest-growing PACs. It grew more than 350 percent that cycle thanks to \$250,000 from Williams Kherkher law firm, \$140,000 from Harris County Sheriff Adrian Garcia and \$100,000 from plaintiff's firm Arnold & Itkin. The PAC spent most of its money paying consultant Matt Angle and analyzing voter turnout and redistricting.

The Mostyn and Watts law firms were the top funders of the **House Democratic Campaign Committee** (HDCC), which also took money from unions, Democratic candidates, Waste Control Specialists and beer distributors. HDCC's biggest expenditures buoyed the successful races of Reps. Abel Herrero, Joseph Moody and Craig Eiland. The PAC placed its biggest losing bet was on House hopeful Yvonne Gonzalez Toureilles.

Fewer than two dozen contributors of \$10,000 and up supplied most of the money wielded by the Houston-based **Conservative Republicans of Texas**. The top contributors were Weimar business consultant Hollis Taylor and Ralph Schmidt of Schmidt Farms Industries in Schulenburg. This PAC spent heavily on consultants and mailers. It spent more than \$175,000 helping to elect Railroad Commissioner Barry Smitherman and sunk almost \$80,000 into Wayne Faircloth's failed challenge to Democratic Rep. Craig Eiland. Conservative Republicans sunk more than \$50,000 apiece on the efforts of Elizabeth Ames Jones and Donna Campbell to unseat Republican Senator Jeff Wentworth. The sidekick **Conservative Republicans of Harris County** collected about half its money from the candidates it backed. These included Harris County District Attorney Mike Anderson, County Tax Assessor Mike Sullivan and the aforementioned Smitherman.³²

Massachusetts-based **ActBlue Texas** raises Texas money. Its top donor, Rep. Garnet Coleman, gave the PAC more than \$50,000, even as the Coleman campaign received more than \$60,000 back from ActBlue. Trial lawyers Frank Herrera, Steve Mostyn, Lisa Blue Baron and Mikal Watts each gave ActBlue from \$10,000 to \$20,000. So did beer distributor Joe LaMantia, architect Henry Munoz, ex-Coca-Cola President Charles Duncan and [Serena Simmons Connelly](#), daughter of nuclear-waste kingpin Harold Simmons. ActBlue favored mostly successful House campaigns. Those of Coleman and Rep. Eric Johnson were uncompetitive sleeper campaigns. ActBlue also gave more than \$40,000 to liberal Rep. Lon Burnam, who narrowly survived a primary challenge, and more than \$22,000 to Rep. Abel Herrero, who faced Republican competition. ActBlue heavily backed two of the four Democratic candidates for the Houston seat ultimately won by ActBlue-backed Rep. Gene Wu. It also gave major support to local Democratic Party PACs in Tarrant, Bexar and Fort Bend counties.

The **Texas Republican Representatives Campaign Committee** (TRRCC) seeks to expand the Texas House's GOP majority. Speaker Joe Straus' campaign is TRRCC's No. 1 contributor, giving it \$350,000 (the Speaker's Texas House Leadership Fund gave \$30,000 more). The campaigns of many other GOP House members also bankrolled TRRCC. The Republican State Leadership Committee gave TRRCC \$300,000. TRRCC took \$20,000 from Scott McArron of Dallas-based TreeMac Funding Group, which the [Better Business Bureau links](#) to the predatory-lending Cash Store. AT&T PAC gave \$15,000. TRRCC received \$10,000 checks from the Altria Group, insurer Argonaut Management, hospital IT contractor Cerner Corp., gas giant Energy Transfer Partners, Texas' electrical co-op trade group and predatory lender [Select Management Resources](#). TRRCC spent the money on close House races. In its four most expensive races, the Republican incumbent won with 55 percent or less of the vote after taking from \$75,000 to \$115,000 from TRRCC. The winners of those races were Reps. Sarah Davis, Kenneth Sheet, Linda Harper-Brown and J.M. Lozano. TRRCC also spent around \$60,000 apiece on the reelections of Reps. Jason Isaac and Stefani Carter. It spent \$75,000 on Rep. Dee Margo's failed reelection bid and \$40,000 or more on the failed House campaigns of Connie Scott and Jason Isaac.



Financing from predatory lenders helped keep House Speaker Joe Straus on the throne.

George P. Bush [co-founded](#) the original Maverick PAC in 2004 to get whippersnappers under 50 involved in Republican politics and Uncle George W. Bush's presidential reelection. Yet **Maverick PAC Texas** has learned that old guys rule where money is concerned. During the 2012 cycle this PAC raised 97 percent its money from two senior citizens in Houston. It got \$900,000 from electronic trader Ed Bosarge and \$120,000 from the late homebuilder Bob Perry. These fossils helped the PAC increase its spending by more than 7,500 percent. Maverick spent heavily on self-promotion in the form of advertising, event planning and public relations.

The **Texas Federation of Republican Women** got money from its local chapters, the campaigns of GOP politicians and from Plano-based Plonka Interactive, which designed this PAC's website. The PAC paid more than \$215,000 in dues to the national federation and spent heavily on salaries, hotels and catering expenses. This spending went above and beyond the \$330,000 spent by the group's separate 2013 Convention PAC.

The campaigns of Democratic politicians led by Texas Senator Kirk Watson and Congressman Lloyd Doggett bankrolled the **Travis County Democratic Party**. The PAC's top individual backers are trial lawyer Ryan Runkle, music and video promoter David Glassco and attorney Karen Watkins. In 2012 Watkins fell several percentage points short of ousting Republican 3rd Court of Appeals Justice David Puryear. This party PAC spent much of its money on salaries, fundraising, printing and rent.

Trial lawyer Mikal Watts bankrolled **Vote Texas**, which backed local candidates. They included Bexar County Tax Assessor Albert Uresti, the failed reelection campaign of Sheriff Amadeo Ortiz and new Rep. Philip Cortez. The PAC paid Adelante Strategy Group \$300,000 and spent \$111,000 on payroll. It spent about \$75,000 on signs and printed materials. It spent more than \$8,000 on robo-calls to get out the vote and to promote a [rally](#) featuring ex-President Bill Clinton.

Back to Basics got all its money from the Mostyn Law Firm except for the \$12,500 it received from a PAC started with gubernatorial candidate Bill White's leftover campaign funds (Citizens for Texas). Back to Basics paid Houston's Elite Change more than \$40,000 to back seven Houston Democratic lawmakers.³³ This PAC helped Rep. Carol Alvarado's House reelection before [backing Sylvia Garcia](#), who beat Alvarado in a special 2013 Senate race. Back to Basics also promoted State Judge Steven Kirkland. After a Kirkland ruling slashed Houston lawyer George Fleming's fees in a diet-drug fen-phen case, Fleming and his **Texas for Good Leaders** PAC bankrolled challenger Elaine Palmer, who defeated Kirkland in a nasty Democratic Primary.³⁴ Back to Basics paid more than \$35,000 apiece to the Austin consulting firms Blue Roots Strategies and PinPoint Public Affairs. It backed the Texas Democratic Party and the House Democratic Campaign Committee. It paid \$27,000 in rent to the Texas First Foundation, a Democratic think tank.

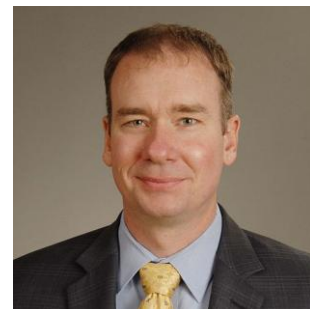
Mark McCaig, a Republican attorney at the Mostyn Law Firm, started the **Conservative Voters of Texas** PAC in the 2012 cycle.³⁵ This Mostyn-funded PAC chiefly funded Texas Senate candidate Dave Norman. Norman lost the GOP primary to then-Rep. Larry Taylor, who had clashed with Mostyn over reforming the troubled Texas Windstorm Insurance Association (which has made huge payouts to Mostyn and his clients).³⁶ Conservative Voters also opposed Rep. J.M. Lozano's victorious reelection campaign.

Speaker Joe Straus' **Texas House Leadership Fund** spent \$467,000 promoting Republican House candidates. The PAC's top funder was Straus himself (\$150,000), followed by fracker Trevor Rees-Jones (\$50,000) and the Texas Consumer Lenders PAC (\$35,000), a predatory-lender trade group. The speaker's leadership PAC gave from \$75,000 to \$115,000 to its top House candidates: Sarah Davis, Kenneth Sheets, J.M. Lozano, Linda Harper-Brown and Dee Margo (all but Margo prevailed).³⁷ The PAC paid consultant Todd Kercheval more than \$60,000.

Big developer and construction interests accounted for much of the money that the short-lived **Keep Metro Moving Forward** PAC spent convincing locals to extend funding for Houston's Metro system. The PAC received \$25,000 from Mayor Annise Parker's campaign and \$20,000 apiece from First Tuesday PAC, Dannenbaum Engineering and the [Rapid Transit Joint Venture](#)—a Houston Metro construction consortium. Keep Metro Moving rolled over the much smaller Houstonians for Responsible Growth, which was backed by homebuilders who prefer roads to rails.³⁸ Four-fifths of local voters got onboard with the Metro-funding referendum.

Texans for America's Future first formed a \$1.3 million [federal super PAC](#) opposing Rick Perry's presidential bid. Three entities then funded the state PAC: First Tuesday PAC (\$452,000), the Mostyn Law Firm (\$200,000) and River Oaks Area Democratic Women (\$5,000). The PAC spent this money promoting a Democratic slate in the Houston area.

TOP PAC and **Empower Texans** both are discussed in the accompanying section on "Dark Money."



Michael Q. Sullivan
of Empower Texans.

Dark-Money Sorcerers

Midland oilman Tim Dunn formed the nonprofit **Empower Texans** (also known as Texans for Fiscal Responsibility) in 2006, a few years after his pal Tom Craddick became Texas' first post-Reconstruction GOP Speaker. Empower is best known for its primary attacks on relatively moderate Republicans, especially after moderate Speaker Joe Straus dethroned Craddick in 2009. With few wealthy Texans willing to openly bankroll attacks on the Speaker and his allies, Empower Texans became the state's biggest user of "dark money." Empower Texans spent \$460,000 in the 2012 cycle. It moved 77 percent of this money through its nonprofit (Texas Ethics Commission No. 68417), which invokes the U.S. Supreme Court's 2009 *Citizens United* case in not disclosing its political contributors. Empower's more transparent PAC (No. 61927) spent a comparatively modest \$107,257; it took 95 percent of its money from Dunn and Austin investor Jeff Sandefer.

Empower's PAC and nonprofit spent most of their money on a couple dozen House races. Their biggest expenditures went into failed challenges to Straus and to Rep. Lance Gooden. In its biggest victories, Empower helped elect new Reps. Travis Clardy, Giovanni Capriglione and Stephanie Klick. The nonprofit spent almost \$290,000 on mailers, more than \$40,000 on Internet ads, as well as \$18,000 on robo-calls. Empower PAC's biggest expenses, meanwhile, went into conference calls with candidates and voters.

Empower's attacks on House members inspired a 2013 bill to require nonprofits to disclose donors. Senators who passed SB 346 dramatically—but belatedly—tried to recall it, leaving it to Governor Perry to veto it. Reps. Jim Keffer and Vicki Truitt answered Empower's attacks with ethics complaints. They allege that Empower President Michael Quinn Sullivan broke the law by not registering as a lobbyist and not disclosing political finances. Empower's nonprofit then began to disclose its expenditures—but not the sources of its funds. Empower also sued the Texas Ethics Commission to release tapes of a private hearing on its pending case.

Houston's **Texas Organizing Project** (Texas Ethics Commission No. 67485) was the other major source of dark money, spending about \$235,000. This nonprofit, which led protests against the state's Obamacare boycott, is easily confused with the San Antonio-based **TOP Political Action Committee** (No. 66821) and the tiny **Texas Organizing Project Education Fund** (No. 68725). Leaders of the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) helped form the Texas Organizing Project and related PACs after ACORN folded in 2010 (following scandals over embezzled funds, alleged voter-registration fraud, and ACORN staff reportedly helping conservative activists find housing for a fictitious brothel).

TOP PAC spent \$430,000 in the 2012 cycle, ranking as the state's fastest-growing PAC. TOP PAC got 94 percent of its money from Steve Mostyn and his law firm. It got the rest from the Service Employees International Union and First Tuesday PAC. TOP PAC paid more than \$18,000 to Washington's Pivot Group for mailers and spent almost \$6,000 on postage. It supported Harris County Sheriff Adrian Garcia's reelection and Ann Harris Bennett's failed Harris County Tax Collector campaign. TOP PAC spent more than \$15,000 on Exxon gas cards and paid Houston's Outreach Strategies \$6,000 for communications consulting. Its payroll consumed much of the remaining funds. Mostyn and this Mostyn-funded PAC later supplied most of the money that Sylvia Garcia used to win an open Senate seat in early 2013.

The nonprofit Texas Organizing Project meanwhile reported \$234,551 in expenditures without disclosing the sources of this money. Texas Organizing Project expenditures resemble those of TOP PAC. It paid Pivot Group and Houston's Monarch Printing almost \$17,000 for mailers and door hangers. It bought more than \$4,000 worth of gas cards, more than \$2,000 in postage and spent most of the rest on staff. This nonprofit promoted Harris County Sheriff Adrian Garcia and 14 other local candidates in Dallas, Irving, Houston and Pasadena. It also backed the successful House bid of Houston Democrat Mary Ann Perez.

Notes

"Fiscal Group Focus of Pair," *Austin-American Statesman*, April 4, 2012.

The Texas Organizing Project Education Fund spent \$2,327 promoting a bond election for a Hidalgo Co. drainage district.

"Texas Organizing Project Says 'It's Not ACORN With a New Name,'" *Dallas Morning News*, July 23, 2010.

Citizen Leader PAC increased its spending almost 4,000 percent from 2010 to the 2012 cycle. So-called ClapPAC focused more than \$400,000 in firepower on the primary destruction of three GOP lawmakers, none of whom survived (Sen. Jeff Wentworth and Reps. Rob Eissler and ‘Tuffy’ Hamilton). This was not an attack by Democrats (who fielded no candidates for the ClapPAC-targeted House seats). Three-fourths of the money that ClapPAC raised in 2012 came from Houston biotech investor Leo Linbeck III, whose late [paternal namesake](#) helped found Texans for Lawsuit Reform. The younger Linbeck simultaneously bankrolled the **Campaign for Primary Accountability**, a federal super PAC that attacked moderate Republicans in Congress.³⁹ Father and son Linbeck shared a zeal for eradicating the IRS.⁴⁰ Linbeck the younger abhors Obamacare and promotes charter schools.⁴¹ On a less-libertarian note, his Aquinas Companies and AlphaDev invest in biotech firms that taxpayers subsidize through the Texas Emerging Technology Fund. The only other citizens who funded Citizen Leader PAC in the 2012 cycle were Panhandle investor Salem Abraham and the late Bob Perry.



Leo Linbeck III

Texas Parent PAC helped flunk school vouchers again in the 2013 legislative session. It gave Sen. Wendy Davis \$53,300 and more than \$12,000 to Reps. Phillip Cortez, Jason Villalba, J.D. Sheffield, Chris Paddie and Trent Ashby. The PAC lost \$10,000 or more on the failed Republican legislative bids of Todd Smith, Amber Fulton and George Alexander. HEB Grocery magnate Charles Butt gave Parent PAC \$275,000, or almost three-fourths of its cash. It also collected \$10,000 apiece from Corsicana oilman Clifford Brown and Joe Phillips, who owns convenience stores in the Rio Grande Valley.

Texans for Economic Development spent \$400,000 on its perennial claim that Texas needs to legalize slot machines at the racetracks that bankroll this PAC. This development theory has been a tough sell, especially with the advent of Tea-Party skeptics. Half the PAC’s money came from three dog-track investors from Alabama led by Paul Bryant, Jr. (football legend “Bear” Bryant’s kid). The PAC took another 40 percent of its cash from the Rio Grande Valley’s LaMantia clan, which sunk some of its beer-distributor fortune into racetrack franchises. Texans for Economic Development cast its largest bet on losing-horse Sen. Jeff Wentworth (\$30,000) but made good on the \$15,000 it placed on Sen. Wendy Davis. The PAC made its largest House bets on Republican losers Chuck Hopson and Sid Miller. Spending by Texans for Economic Development dropped 45 percent in 2012. This drop was much less severe than several other gambling PACs listed among the “fastest-shrinking PACs.”



HEB CEO Charles Butt

Wealthy Anglos led by Bob Perry (\$75,000) and Robert Rowling (\$50,000) bankrolled **Hispanic Republicans of Texas**. The top beneficiaries of this cash include two Hispanic Republican winners (Reps. Jason Villalba and J.M. Lozano) and three losers (House candidate Dora Alcalá and Senate challengers Raul Torres and Dan Chavez). Alcalá’s defeat poses the biggest GOP Hispanic challenge—and not just because Eagle Pass Democrat Poncho Nevarez won that open seat by 20 percentage points. A much bigger problem for Hispanic Republicans of Texas is that two-thirds of Republican Primary voters snubbed Latina Dora Alcalá for Anglo-male-sounding Thomas Kincaid.

Top New PACs

2012 Spending	2012 Rank	PAC	Interest Category
\$493,051	50	Conservative Voters of Texas (R)	Ideological/Single Issue
\$464,354	55	Keep Metro Moving Forward	Ideological/Single Issue
\$453,682	56	Texans for America's Future (D)	Ideological/Single Issue
\$414,342	60	Waste Control Specialists	Energy/Natural Resources/Waste
\$365,325	70	GEO Group, Inc.	Miscellaneous Business
\$352,358	77	Empower Texans (R)	Ideological/Single Issue
\$282,762	104	One Texas PAC (D)	Ideological/Single Issue
\$252,398	111	Balance PAC	Lawyers & Lobbyists
\$250,366	112	American Worker, Inc.	Unknown
\$234,551	117	Texas Organizing Project (D)	Ideological/Single Issue
\$234,546	118	Community & Military Affairs Coalition	Ideological/Single Issue
\$188,764	140	Kids First	Ideological/Single Issue
\$188,564	141	Phillips 66	Energy/Natural Resources/Waste
\$159,500	163	Webster Surgical Specialty Hospital	Health
\$135,312	179	TX Senate Democratic Campaign Com. (D)	Ideological/Single Issue
\$128,000	186	Dental Group Practice	Health
\$126,057	190	Harden Healthcare LLC	Health
\$110,339	212	RagingElephants.org Texas PAC (R)	Ideological/Single Issue

The 2012 cycle introduced 18 new PACs that spent more than \$100,000 apiece. More than half of these new PACs fall into the Ideological category. Many new 2012 PACs are discussed in the sections on Energy, Lawyers, Health and Ideological PACs.

Florida-based prison giant **GEO Group** abandoned one PAC in 2010 and started a new one in the 2012 cycle. It could not afford to be between PACs for long. The *Austin American-Statesman* reported that Governor Perry's office pressed lawmakers to privatize prison health services after meeting with contractors in 2011. GEO opened the state's first privatized psychiatric hospital in Conroe that same year. Scathing regulatory reviews of that hospital facility panned GEO's unauthorized use of drugs and restraints and its failure to report serious injuries. GEO was the state's sole bidder to privatize a Kerrville state psychiatric hospital in 2012. The state rejected that bid, concluding that GEO's plan to layoff a fifth of the hospital's staff was too reckless.

GEO's PAC gave heavily to federal candidates, led by a \$50,000 Mitt Romney contribution. Its biggest check influencing Texas state races was \$25,000 to the aforementioned Republican State Leadership Committee (Geo Group also gave \$10,000 *corporate* checks to the Mexican-American Legislative Caucus and to the Texas Legislative Black Caucus). The state politicians most indebted to GEO PAC are Senators Troy Fraser and Tommy Williams and Rep. Harvey Hilderbran. Sen. Williams has been a big booster of GEO's troubled Conroe hospital, while Rep. Hilderbran opposed GEO's bid to privatize the Kerrville hospital.

New **One Texas PAC** channeled money from trial lawyers, Democratic officials and labor unions into House races. This PAC got more than half its money from three contributors: Mikal Watts' law firm, the Mostyn Law Firm and Rep. Trey Martinez Fischer's campaign. One Texas PAC cast its biggest bets on winning Reps. Abel Herrero (\$89,405), Joe Moody (\$60,000) Phil Cortez (\$27,544) and Mary Ann Perez (\$10,000). It lost \$10,000 apiece on the House races of Carol Kent, Robert Miklos and Yvonne Gonzalez Toureilles.

Mikal Watts was the sole funder of Washington's bizarre **American Worker PAC**, which didn't work much. In its first and final disclosure, this PAC reported that it received—and returned—a \$250,000 check from Watts.

The short-lived **Community & Military Affairs Coalition PAC** promoted a 2012 vote to expand a local tax district supporting Texarkana College. The PAC got three-fifths of its money from trial lawyer Cary Patterson and fellow Texarkana resident Susan Naples.

Notes

"Struggles Don't Slow Privatization, *Austin American –Statesman*, July 22, 2010.

"Perry Aides Explore Privatizing Prisoner Health Care," *Austin American –Statesman*, March 29, 2011.

"Flush With Prison Industry Dollars," *Mother Jones*, September 1, 2011.

"Hospital Ex-Chief in Clear, State Says," *Austin American –Statesman*, September 2, 2012.

"Proposal to Privatize Hospital Rejected," *Austin American –Statesman*, October 4, 2012.

Shrinking PACs

% Chg.	2012 Spending	2010 Spending	PAC	Interest Category	2012 Rank	2010 Rank
-100%	\$62	\$1,063,102	Coal. Harris Co. Dem. Elect. Officials (D)	Ideological/Single Issue	1,347	19
-100%	\$31	\$120,486	Santos Alliances	Lawyers & Lobbyists	1,354	195
-100%	\$123	\$111,975	Moving WilCo Forward (D)	Ideological/Single Issue	1,334	211
-100%	\$150	\$103,770	Texans for Public Education (D)	Ideological/Single Issue	1,332	224
-100%	\$327	\$102,723	Ebby Halliday Centennial Fund	Real Estate	1,287	229
-100%	\$21,339	\$5,346,265	Texas Democratic Trust (D)	Ideological/Single Issue	595	2
-99%	\$2,872	\$398,620	Texas Values in Action Coalition (D)	Ideological/Single Issue	1,047	60
-99%	\$2,085	\$168,137	Northside Bond Committee	Ideological/Single Issue	1,105	150
-99%	\$3,704	\$251,919	Turn Texas Blue (D)	Ideological/Single Issue	1,001	108
-98%	\$4,107	\$196,419	Liberty Campaign for Texas	Ideological/Single Issue	979	135
-95%	\$71,650	\$1,522,331	North Texas Leadership PAC (D)	Miscellaneous Business	307	16
-93%	\$22,959	\$348,844	Lone Star Fund (D)	Ideological/Single Issue	572	72
-93%	\$45,723	\$630,772	NRA Political Victory Fund	Ideological/Single Issue	403	35
-92%	\$24,145	\$316,590	Electric Delivery PAC	Energy/Nat'l Resources	553	80
-90%	\$10,775	\$103,825	PSI PAC	Construction	753	223
-88%	\$13,127	\$113,268	Wells Fargo & Co.	Finance	716	208
-88%	\$23,116	\$198,166	GOPAC-TX (R)	Ideological/Single Issue	567	133
-87%	\$527,330	\$4,217,947	Back to Basics (D)	Ideological/Single Issue	48	3
-87%	\$32,559	\$258,926	Houston Federation of Teachers	Labor	482	104
-87%	\$34,000	\$259,057	MAXXAM, Inc.	Finance	466	102
-85%	\$24,055	\$160,033	Fund For The Future	Construction	557	158
-82%	\$96,157	\$535,941	New American PAC (D)	Ideological/Single Issue	237	43
-82%	\$38,259	\$209,991	House Democratic Campaign Com. (D)	Ideological/Single Issue	441	126
-72%	\$81,775	\$292,226	Texas Gaming Association	Miscellaneous Business	275	87
-70%	\$138,362	\$459,335	Texas Progress Council (D)	Ideological/Single Issue	176	49

Fifteen of the 25 fastest-shrinking PACs hail from the Ideological & Single-Issue sector. Eleven contracting PACs are liberal or Democratic, including three that spent more than \$1 million in 2010. They are the Coalition of Harris County Democratic Elected Officials, Back to Basics and the Texas Democratic Trust. Dallas trial lawyer Domingo Garcia's pro-immigrant New American PAC also took a big hit, as did the Texas Progress Council, which depended on the ailing Texas Democratic Trust. GOPAC-TX is the only Republican committee that made the list of "fast-shrinking" PACs.

Several fast-shrinking Business PACs had gambling ties, including the Texas Gaming Association, and Sam Houston Race Park owner MAXXAM. Dental-clinic magnate David Alameel, who made a failed play to start a Metroplex horse track, funded the pro-Democrat North Texas Leadership PAC.

V. Top Labor PACs

Most of the top Labor PACs below represent public sector employees. They include seven police PACs, five firefighter PACs and four teacher PACs. The Austin Police Association PAC ranks among 2012's fastest-growing PACs, while the fast-shrinking Houston Federation of Teachers PAC no longer made the list of Texas' Top Labor PACs. Just five of this sector's top PACs hail from blue-collar unions.

Top Labor PACs

2012 Spending	PAC	2012 Rank	2008 Rank	'08-'10 Growth
\$804,710	Fort Worth Firefighters Committee	23	45	57%
\$510,759	Houston Police Officers Union	49	66	39%
\$486,335	TX State Teachers Assn.	51	46	-5%
\$464,523	Houston Professional Fire Fighters Assn.	54	111	89%
\$350,275	Fort Worth Police Officer's Assn.	79	179	159%
\$317,613	San Antonio Police Officers Assn.	93	53	-27%
\$299,551	San Antonio Firefighters	99	134	52%
\$231,343	Plumbers Local No. 68	120	84	-24%
\$215,179	Assn. of TX Professional Educators	126	151	28%
\$209,851	Pipe Fitters Local Union 211 PAC	128	183	58%
\$188,069	United Transportation Union PAC	142	188	46%
\$158,500	ACT for TX Classroom Teachers	164	142	-17%
\$157,257	Education Austin	165	176	14%
\$156,101	Irving Fire Fighters Committee	167	263	84%
\$154,965	Dallas Fire Fighters Committee	168	273	89%
\$154,011	TX AFL-CIO	169	164	3%
\$127,702	Deputy Sheriff's Assn. of Bexar County	188	129	-37%
\$118,482	Teamsters Local 988	201	166	-18%
\$117,000	American Federation of Teachers-TX	203	243	22%
\$112,603	Combined Law Enforcement Assns. of TX	209	321	76%
\$112,396	Austin Police Association PAC	210	431	203%
\$107,036	Dallas Police Officers	218	258	23%

Extinct PACs

2010 Spending	PAC	2010 Rank
\$681,448	Grass Roots Institute of TX PAC	31
\$318,159	San Antonio Board of Realtors	79
\$292,035	Texas 2020 PAC	88
\$231,170	WellMed Medical Management	115

Four PACs that dropped more than \$200,000 apiece in 2010 spent nothing in 2012. The now-extinct Grass Roots Institute of Texas and WellMed Medical Management PAC had ranked among the biggest new PACs of 2010. The San Antonio Board of Realtors PAC and Texas 2020 PAC also vanished. A business-funded committee to cultivate moderate Democrats, Texas 2020 never lived to see Texas in 2020.

VI. Specific-Purpose PACs

Most of this report focuses on the “general-purpose PACs” that were active in Texas in the 2012 cycle. During this period many so-called “specific purpose PACs” also reported expenditures to the Texas Ethics Commission. Most specific-purpose PACs exclusively support a specific candidate, as in the case of “Texans for Rick Perry.” Yet eight specific-purpose PACs collectively spent almost \$1 million for other purposes.

Two of the largest of these PACs promoted proposed water-related constitutional amendments on the November 2011 ballot. H2O4Texas PAC spent \$330,000 to help narrowly pass an amendment that granted the Texas Water Development Board authority to issue up to \$6 billion in bonds for infrastructure projects (Proposition 2). H2O4Texas PAC got most of this money from industrial water consumers concentrated in the energy, chemical and computer chip industries.⁴² The Texas Oil and Gas Association was the No. 1 donor to this PAC. The trade group’s members consume huge amounts of water for fracking.⁴³

Top Specific-Purpose PACs

Amount Spent In 2012 Cycle	Political Action Committee
\$330,100	H2O4Texas PAC
\$297,099	Texans for Responsible Government
\$144,943	Texans For Honesty PAC
\$100,075	Clean, Reliable Water for Texas
\$46,650	Let the People Vote Houston
\$29,100	Texarkana United
\$10,067	Judy Jennings/Rebecca Bell-Metereau Legal Def. Fund
\$6,165	www.cookcitizens.org
TOTAL	

Ex-Texas Parks and Wildlife head Andrew Sansom and revolving-door lobbyist Kip Averitt formed **Clean Reliable Water for Texas** to promote 2011’s Proposition 8. That amendment would have granted property-tax breaks to landowners who conserve water by controlling erosion or brush. Although Mary Kay, Inc. provided 84 percent of the PAC’s funding, the narrowly defeated amendment needed more lipstick to prevail. The Texas Nature Conservancy, which Sansom previously headed, provided the rest of the funding.

As discussed in the Real Estate section, the Texas Association of Realtors PAC sunk supplied the vast majority of the \$297,099 spent by the short-lived **Texans for Responsible Government PAC**. Its state purpose was to evict incumbent Rep. Wayne Christian from the Texas House. Bombarded by this PAC, Rep. Christian narrowly lost the GOP primary to Chris Paddie. Texans for Responsible Government also received \$30,000 from the Texas Medical Association and \$5,000 from Austin consultant William Bragg

A GOP consulting firm, the Patriot Group, formed **Texans for Honesty PAC** to capitalize on the affair that Democrat John Edwards had to relieve the twin stresses of the 2008 presidential campaign trail and his wife’s battle with breast cancer. The late trial lawyer Fred Baron bankrolled both the Edwards campaign and damage-control costs associated with Edwards’s affair.⁴⁴ The GOP wanted to pin the Edwards scandal on Texas Democrats, whom Baron also funded. As Edwards’s love child moved past toddlerhood in the 2012 cycle, Texans for Honesty spent about \$145,000. Karl Rove’s [Republican State Leadership Committee](#) and the late Houston homebuilder [Bob Perry](#) supplied 79 percent of the money that this PAC raised that cycle.⁴⁵ Texans for Honesty spent more than \$132,000 on the GOP campaigns of [Sen. Kelly Hancock](#) and Rep. Stephanie Klick.⁴⁶

Let the People Vote Houston PAC Treasurer Bruce Hotze has led repeated attempts to restrict the city of Houston's revenue and spending.⁴⁷ Hotze's PAC took most of its money from the Conservative Republicans of Harris County PAC, Houston real estate investor Allen Hartman and Hotze himself.

Texarkana United opposed a 2011 initiative to let grocery and convenience stores sell wine and beer on the Texas side of Texarkana. Retail interests that would benefit from such a change accused alcohol sellers just over the Arkansas line of funding opposition.⁴⁸ Indeed, almost all the money that Texarkana United used to oppose the Texas alcohol sales came from the Party Factory—a liquor store on the Arkansas side of State Line Road.

A **Legal Defense Fund** for Democratic defendants Judy Jennings and Rebecca Bell-Metereau spent more than \$10,000, mostly on the George & Brothers law firm. This Democratic duo lost 2010 and 2012 bids for the State Board of Education. The board's conservative majority has shaped Texas textbook accounts of the Holy Trinity: Christianity, capitalism and creationism. In a 2010 ad, Jennings and Bell-Metereau criticized GOP board members for taking advice from conservative Christian activist [David Barton](#), whom the ad said is "known for speaking at white supremacist rallies."⁴⁹ Barton said that when he addressed the Christian Identity movement 19 years earlier he did not know that its members espouse the superiority of European whites over Jews and "subhuman" races. Barton's pending defamation [lawsuit](#) argues that it is inaccurate to claim that he is now known for a speech to supremacists two decades ago.



Wallbuilders head David Barton argues this is *not* what white supremacy looks like.

Treasurer Steve Gaylord and Ken Arterbury run and fund their anti-tax www.cookecitizens.org. The PAC runs ads to influence local elections and bond initiatives in Cooke County, north of the Metroplex near the Oklahoma border.

VII. Texas' Biggest PACs

'12 Rank	'10 Rank	'08 Rank	'06 Rank	'04 Rank	Committee Name	2012 Spending	Interest Category
1	1	4	1	1	Texans For Lawsuit Reform	\$7,824,875	Ideological/Single Issue
2	4	5	2	2	TX Assn. of Realtors	\$4,840,375	Real Estate
3	7	18	10	7	Associated Republicans of TX	\$3,544,156	Ideological/Single Issue
4	8	7	7	6	Texans for Insurance Reform	\$2,896,376	Lawyers & Lobbyists
5	14				Republican State Leadership Committee	\$2,767,368	Ideological/Single Issue
6	11	11	13	30	Annie's List	\$2,725,517	Ideological/Single Issue
7	12	3	4	3	Republican Party of TX	\$2,564,357	Ideological/Single Issue
8	13	19	25		Border Health PAC	\$2,070,373	Health
9	10	8	5	9	Valero Energy Corp.	\$2,009,216	Energy/Natural Resources
10	5	2	9	4	TX Democratic Party	\$1,745,017	Ideological/Single Issue
11	6	6	20	115	TX Assn. of Realtors Issues Mobilization	\$1,736,228	Real Estate
12	18	12	8	5	TX Medical Assn.	\$1,692,899	Health
13	105	16			First Tuesday	\$1,157,974	Ideological/Single Issue
14	17	14	12	10	AT&T Inc.	\$1,132,753	Communications/Electronics
15	20	21	22	8	TX Trial Lawyers Assn.	\$1,104,824	Lawyers & Lobbyists
16	9	10	15	36	House Democratic Campaign Committee	\$1,032,175	Ideological/Single Issue
17	22	23	55	67	Independent Insurance Agents of TX	\$989,423	Insurance
18	23	17	18	15	HillCo PAC	\$972,279	Lawyers & Lobbyists
19	54	95	171	325	Atmos Energy Corp.	\$916,550	Energy/Natural Resources
20	24	181	680		Conservative Republicans of TX	\$858,791	Ideological/Single Issue
21	15	24	831		ActBlue TX	\$837,941	Ideological/Single Issue
22	48	76	102	198	HDR, Inc.	\$827,584	Construction
23	45	26	51	29	Fort Worth Firefighters Committee	\$804,710	Labor
24	78				TX Repub. Representatives Campaign Com.	\$790,755	Ideological/Single Issue
25	765	807	173		MAVERICK PAC TX	\$787,591	Ideological/Single Issue
26	30	34	36	40	TX Federation of Republican Women	\$757,651	Ideological/Single Issue
27	42	29	32	18	TX Optometric PAC	\$744,679	Health
28	21	54	17	49	Ryan TX PAC	\$744,244	Finance
29	33	59	33	48	TX Farm Bureau	\$718,831	Agriculture
30	25	32	93	206	ConocoPhillips	\$714,023	Energy/Natural Resources
31	77	148			TX Consumer Lenders	\$713,553	Finance
32	27	25	30	41	TX Friends of Time Warner Cable	\$686,506	Communications/Electronics
33	29	31	53	98	Travis County Democratic Party	\$670,239	Ideological/Single Issue
34	83	544			State Farm Agents PAC	\$636,440	Insurance
35	44	61	59	55	United Services Auto. Assn.	\$635,825	Insurance
36	34	30	35	22	Andrews & Kurth	\$607,551	Lawyers & Lobbyists
37	71	33	436	256	Vote TX	\$568,739	Ideological/Single Issue
38	39	52	52	43	TX Apartment Assn.	\$567,225	Real Estate
39	63	256			NuStar	\$561,533	Energy/Natural Resources
40	50	55	45	24	CenterPoint Energy, Inc.	\$561,425	Energy/Natural Resources
41	41	35	31	20	Union Pacific Corp.	\$559,462	Transportation
42	32	28	24	13	Fulbright & Jaworski	\$556,404	Lawyers & Lobbyists
43	56	69	81	74	TX Credit Union League	\$555,638	Finance
44	38	40	54	19	TX Dental Assn.	\$555,019	Health
45	58	85	118	179	Dow Chemical Co.	\$545,693	Energy/Natural Resources
46	26	22	21	11	Vinson & Elkins	\$537,793	Lawyers & Lobbyists
47	40	37	63	61	Wholesale Beer Distributors of TX	\$534,566	Miscellaneous Business
48	3				Back to Basics	\$527,330	Ideological/Single Issue

49	66	58	68	34	Houston Police Officers Union	\$510,759	Labor
50					Conservative Voters of TX	\$493,051	Ideological/Single Issue
51	46	38	34	32	TX State Teachers Assn.	\$486,335	Labor
52	59	48	58	46	TX Oil & Gas PAC	\$473,000	Energy/Natural Resources
53	37				TX House Leadership Fund	\$466,939	Ideological/Single Issue
54	111	171	128	79	Houston Professional Fire Fighters Assn.	\$464,523	Labor
55					Keep Metro Moving Forward	\$464,354	Ideological/Single Issue
56					Texans for America's Future	\$453,682	Ideological/Single Issue
57	75	65	65	63	Haynes & Boone	\$442,601	Lawyers & Lobbyists
58	1275				TOP PAC	\$428,548	Ideological/Single Issue
59	262				Citizen Leader PAC	\$415,900	Ideological/Single Issue
60					WCS – Waste Control Specialists	\$414,342	Energy/Natural Resources
61	148	15	38		TX Parent PAC	\$402,580	Ideological/Single Issue
62	28	13	125		Texans for Economic Development	\$399,435	Ideological/Single Issue
63	73	70	72	129	American Electric	\$393,000	Energy/Natural Resources
64	69	91	70	88	TX Architects Committee	\$382,990	Construction
65	206	656			TX Events PAC	\$381,604	Miscellaneous Business
66	57	36	43	47	Winstead PC	\$381,550	Lawyers & Lobbyists
67	68	104	96	80	TX Society of Anesthesiologists	\$368,188	Health
68	144	129	198	53	Conservative Republicans of Harris Co.	\$367,004	Ideological/Single Issue
69	51	71	57	57	Independent Bankers Assn.	\$365,591	Finance
70					GEO Group, Inc.	\$365,325	Miscellaneous Business
71	949	125	155	37	Compass Bancshares, Inc.	\$363,173	Finance
72	67	80	79	94	Associated General Contractors of TX	\$361,998	Construction
73	99				Hispanic Republicans of TX	\$361,731	Ideological/Single Issue
74	85	84	80	14	BNSF Railway Co.	\$360,816	Transportation
75	368	144	135	295	El Paso Corp.	\$355,201	Energy/Natural Resources
76	65	44	37	27	Farmers Employee & Agent PAC of TX	\$354,279	Insurance
77					Empower Texans	\$352,358	Ideological/Single Issue
78	61	60	47	45	K & L Gates LLP	\$351,811	Lawyers & Lobbyists
79	179	180	253	193	Fort Worth Police Officer's Assn.	\$350,275	Labor
80	107	73	200		TX Deer Assn.	\$348,310	Agriculture
81	81	115	109	77	Gulf States Toyota, Inc.	\$346,750	Transportation
82	36	56	148		TX & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Assn.	\$344,681	Agriculture
83	98	152	120	105	Good Government Fund (Fort Worth)	\$342,313	Energy/Natural Resources
84	106	47	44	25	Bracewell & Giuliani	\$340,594	Lawyers & Lobbyists
85	52	42	50	44	TX Assn. of Builders	\$335,475	Construction
86	62	78	106	75	TX Society of Certified Public Accountants	\$333,327	Finance
87	118				TX Fed. of Republican Women Convention	\$329,779	Ideological/Single Issue
88	89	122	123	254	TX Land Title Assn.	\$327,944	Real Estate
89	70	100	103	103	Associated Gen'l Contractors Building Branch	\$323,500	Construction
90	112	72	73	60	Jackson Walker	\$323,363	Lawyers & Lobbyists
91	76	64	40	31	Baker Botts	\$321,937	Lawyers & Lobbyists
92	91	132	174	156	TX Assn. for Home Care & Hospice	\$319,887	Health
93	53	131	101	72	San Antonio Police Officers Assn.	\$317,613	Labor
94	536				Comerica Inc.	\$316,655	Finance
95	86	229	284	268	University of Houston PAC	\$316,461	Ideological/Single Issue
96	139				Houston Realty Business Coalition	\$316,365	Real Estate
97	95	130	133	116	Beer Alliance of TX	\$301,328	Miscellaneous Business
98	82	62	42	33	Q PAC	\$300,246	Finance
99	134	117	117	78	San Antonio Firefighters PAC	\$299,551	Labor

100	130				Mednax, Inc.	\$296,607	Health
101	137	113	100	62	TX Hospital Assn.	\$296,341	Health
102	74	46	46	35	TX Automobile Dealers Assn.	\$294,250	Transportation
103	549	341			KBR Inc.	\$294,200	Construction
104					One TX PAC	\$282,762	Ideological/Single Issue
105	94	79	67	42	Friends of the University	\$281,271	Other
106	90	43	108	124	TX Restaurant Assn.	\$280,852	Miscellaneous Business
107	100	138	154	347	Tarrant County Democratic Party	\$271,149	Ideological/Single Issue
108	92	93	89	87	Kirby Corp.	\$269,299	Transportation
109	64	83	87	119	TX Consumer Finance Assn.	\$266,172	Finance
110	101	94	88	54	Houston Apartment Assn.	\$258,783	Real Estate
111					Balance PAC	\$252,398	Other
112					American Worker, Inc.	\$250,366	Unknown
113	339	101	74	215	Lyondell Chemical Co.	\$249,368	Energy/Natural Resources
114	96	151	360	604	TX Construction Assn.	\$248,024	Construction
115	611				Oncor Electric Delivery Admin. Corp. PAC	\$246,916	Energy/Natural Resources
116	109	107	156	150	TX Health Care Assn.	\$246,750	Health
117					TX Organizing Project (TOP)	\$234,551	Ideological/Single Issue
118					Community & Military Affairs Coalition	\$234,546	Ideological/Single Issue
119	157	204			Chesapeake Energy	\$232,012	Energy/Natural Resources
120	84	99	83	59	Plumbers Local #68 PAC	\$231,343	Labor
121	141	214	263	146	Cash America International, Inc.	\$226,431	Finance
122	256	141	112	145	TX Right To Life	\$225,446	Ideological/Single Issue
123	165	118	574		NRG Energy, Inc.	\$219,774	Energy/Natural Resources
124	699	162	61	21	Coca-Cola Refreshments USA, Inc.	\$216,616	Miscellaneous Business
125	103	111	91	189	TX Bankers Assn. Bankers	\$216,271	Finance
126	151	126	152	110	Assn. of TX Professional Educators	\$215,179	Labor
127	121				Greenberg Traurig	\$210,028	Lawyers & Lobbyists
128	183	189	233		Pipe Fitters Local Union 211	\$209,851	Labor
129	146	145	76	52	Nat'l Assn. of Insurance & Fin'l Advisors	\$207,826	Insurance
130	128	74	137	187	TX Pharmacy Assn.	\$207,365	Health
131	156	108	69	147	Licensed Beverage Distributors	\$205,750	Miscellaneous Business
132	136	168	110	50	C Club	\$203,132	Ideological/Single Issue
133	143	103	131	135	Rural Friends of TX Electric Co-ops	\$203,000	Energy/Natural Resources
134	110	176	650		American Subcontractors Assn. of TX	\$199,586	Construction
135	114	128	84	56	Gardere Wynne Sewell LLP	\$199,438	Lawyers & Lobbyists
136	219	153	97	85	TX Ophthalmological Assn.	\$194,586	Health
137	97	68	16	92	RNDC PAC	\$194,000	Miscellaneous Business
138	140	197	223	162	Houston Associated General Contractors	\$192,560	Construction
139	47	183			Spectra Energy Corp.	\$190,784	Energy/Natural Resources
140					Kids First	\$188,764	Ideological/Single Issue
141					Phillips 66	\$188,564	Energy/Natural Resources
142	188	186	209	191	United Transportation Union	\$188,069	Labor
143	119	169	122	133	PSEL PAC	\$184,813	Energy/Natural Resources
144	282	557			HS LAW Hance Scarborough	\$184,718	Lawyers & Lobbyists
145	172	123	222	282	MetroTex Assn. of Realtors	\$184,550	Real Estate
146	132	92	82	83	Greater Houston Builders Assn.	\$183,750	Construction
147	145	119	119	126	Apartment Assn. of Greater Dallas	\$183,316	Real Estate
148	215	188	144	137	TX Instruments, Inc.	\$182,090	Communications/Electronics
149	161	156	127	120	Occidental Petroleum Corp.	\$181,140	Energy/Natural Resources
150	162	210	202	122	TX Veterinary Medical Assn.	\$178,856	Agriculture

151	163	160	153	113	Friends of Baylor Med	\$177,775	Health
152	160	177	346		EZCORP, Inc.	\$177,654	Finance
153	226	227			TX Forward Committee	\$171,732	Ideological/Single Issue
154	265				Denbury Resources, Inc.	\$171,070	Energy/Natural Resources
155	120	146	211	96	Energy PAC of Energy Future Holdings Corp.	\$171,030	Energy/Natural Resources
156	93	109			Medical Defense PAC	\$169,990	Ideological/Single Issue
157	406	228	218	184	Real Estate Council of Austin	\$169,505	Real Estate
158	55	110	129	311	Libertarian Party of TX	\$167,904	Ideological/Single Issue
159	122	98	92	91	Beef PAC	\$167,274	Agriculture
160	123	174	176	114	Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam, Inc.	\$166,217	Construction
161	152	173	196	180	New Braunfels Republican Women	\$164,173	Ideological/Single Issue
162	286	136	66	58	Landry's Seafood Restaurants, Inc.	\$161,315	Miscellaneous Business
163					Webster Surgical Specialty Hospital	\$159,500	Health
164	142	88	85	66	ACT for TX Classroom Teachers Assn.	\$158,500	Labor
165	176	172	113	158	Education Austin PAC	\$157,257	Labor
166	125	133	220	288	TX Radiological Society	\$157,197	Health
167	263	235	548		Irving Fire Fighters Committee	\$156,101	Labor
168	273	304	740	757	Dallas Fire Fighters Committee	\$154,965	Labor
169	164	230	184	188	AFL-CIO	\$154,011	Labor
170	174	192	187	335	Half Associates	\$153,500	Construction
171	187	139			Citizens for TX	\$151,642	Ideological/Single Issue
172	291	187	166	330	Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast	\$149,514	Ideological/Single Issue
173	200	217	266	316	Blue Cross & Blue Shield of TX	\$147,776	Health
174	581	548	855		Apache Corp.	\$143,050	Energy/Natural Resources
175	154	102	75	64	TX Aggregates & Concrete Assn.	\$141,614	Construction
176	49	41	62		TX Progress Council	\$138,362	Ideological/Single Issue
177	207	207	167	107	HCA TX	\$136,618	Health
178	259	1131			Deloitte TX	\$135,490	Finance
179					TX Senate Democratic Campaign Com.	\$135,312	Ideological/Single Issue
180	319	142	633		Maverick PAC USA	\$134,126	Ideological/Single Issue
181	138	127	141	109	Heart Place	\$134,000	Health
182	267	137	227	259	Contran Corp.	\$134,000	Finance
183	181	159	142	100	TX Food & Fuel Assn.	\$129,593	Miscellaneous Business
184	113	149	121	208	Galveston Co. Democratic Party	\$129,404	Ideological/Single Issue
185	240	282	261	231	TX Mortgage Bankers	\$128,500	Finance
186					Dental Group Practice	\$128,000	Health
187	186	247	618		Republic Services, Inc.	\$127,741	Miscellaneous Business
188	129	124	105	144	Deputy Sheriff's Assn. of Bexar Co.	\$127,702	Labor
189	180	87	114	65	Power PAC of Energy Future Holdings Corp.	\$126,255	Energy/Natural Resources
190					Harden Healthcare LLC	\$126,057	Health
191	167	231	214	185	S & B Engineers & Constructors, Ltd.	\$125,600	Construction
192	217	106	77	102	TX Manufactured Housing Assn.	\$125,553	Construction
193	222	271	373		Centene Corp.	\$124,750	Health
194	386	368	449	460	BOMA Advocacy Committee	\$124,403	Real Estate
195	169	251	192	414	Exxon Mobil Corp.	\$122,326	Energy/Natural Resources
196	225	157	139	140	Verizon Communications, Inc.	\$120,781	Communications/Electronics
197	202	97	195	284	Williamson Co. Republican Party	\$120,223	Ideological/Single Issue
198	317	236	269	353	Real Estate Council	\$120,061	Real Estate
199	124	158	126	108	Zachry Construction Corp.	\$120,000	Construction
200	323	451	521	394	El Paso Electric Co.	\$118,962	Energy/Natural Resources
201	166	195		418	Teamsters Local 988	\$118,482	Labor

202	220	225	226	173	Southwestern Research & Medical PAC	\$118,343	Health
203	243	215	238	163	TX American Federation of Teachers	\$117,000	Labor
204	645	366	444	243	TX Assn. of Business & Commerce	\$116,849	Miscellaneous Business
205	193	285	190	212	International Bank of Commerce	\$116,300	Finance
206	280	385	339	297	Junior & Community College PAC	\$114,500	Ideological/Single Issue
207	570	167	281	449	IPR-GDF SUEZ North America, Inc.	\$114,500	Energy/Natural Resources
208	235	339	262	251	TX Motor Transportation Assn.	\$114,250	Transportation
209	321	275	308	300	Combined Law Enforcement Assns. of TX	\$112,603	Labor
210	431	371	235	217	Austin Police Assn.	\$112,396	Labor
211	153	216	206	371	TEXO-PAC	\$110,554	Construction
212					RagingElephants.org TX	\$110,339	Ideological/Single Issue
213	221	212	228	170	Chevron	\$110,000	Energy/Natural Resources
214	413	163	207	779	Owens Corning	\$109,875	Construction
215	177	200	124	68	TX & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Assn.	\$108,550	Agriculture
216	588	267	433		Pioneer Natural Resources USA, Inc.	\$107,600	Energy/Natural Resources
217	175	27			Empower Texans	\$107,257	Ideological/Single Issue
218	258	266	230	261	Dallas Police Officer's PAC	\$107,036	Labor
219	796	513			Energy Transfer Partners	\$106,874	Energy/Natural Resources
220	218	239	193	134	TX Civil Justice League	\$106,581	Ideological/Single Issue
221	269	190	224	201	Temple Area Builders Assn.	\$105,760	Construction
222	769				Oncor Electric Delivery Admin. Corp. TX PAC	\$105,550	Energy/Natural Resources
223	236				Tenaska	\$105,222	Energy/Natural Resources
224	127	86	157		Compass Bancshares, Inc.	\$103,750	Finance
225	155	161	199	235	Houston Council of Engineering Companies	\$102,810	Construction
226	203	90	71	39	Energy Future Holdings Corp. TX Employee PAC	\$101,975	Energy/Natural Resources
227	189	263			Costello, Inc.	\$100,905	Construction
228	238	209	170	153	Continental Airlines, Inc.	\$100,740	Transportation

VIII. Notes

¹ The largest PAC expenditures typically are contributions to candidates or other PACs; PACs also spend money on overhead and other expenses that also are included here.

² [“Drilling for Dollars: How Big Money Has a Big Influence at the Railroad Commission,”](#) Public Citizen, December 2010.

³ [“Texas Railroad Commission Takes Steps to Modernize,”](#) *Texas Tribune*, January 25, 2013.

⁴ [“Attempt to Overhaul Railroad Commission Fails, Again,”](#) WFAA, May 31, 2013.

⁵ “Why Oil and Gas Lobbyists Were Big Spenders This Session,” StateImpact Texas, June 13, 2013.

⁶ See also “Fracking Drains Water Supplies,” *Dallas Morning News*, August 29, 2013.

⁷ “Texas Governor Signs Bill Key to \$2 Billion Water Plan,” Reuters, May 28, 2013. “Lawmakers Near Water Plan,” *Austin American-Statesman*, May 26, 2013.

⁸ “Ousted Texas Water Planners: We were ‘Excluded,’” Associated Press, June 5, 2013.

⁹ “Doctors, Others Seek EFH Coal Plant Limits,” *Dallas Morning News*, August 28, 2013.

¹⁰ “In Climate Politics, Texas Aims To Be the Anti-California,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 7, 2010. “Tailpipe Emission Regulations Unlawful, Abbott Says,” *Austin American-Statesman*, June 7, 2011.

¹¹ The federal appeals court that threw out Abbott’s lawsuit for the third time ruled that Texas did not meet “the stringent standards” required for him to stay the climate-change regulation.” Court Sides With EPA in Air Case,” *Dallas Morning News*, January 13, 2011.

¹² Atmos PAC’s favorite causes outside Texas were the Republican Governor’s Association (\$50,000) and the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), which drafts model state bills that serve the interests of its corporate contributors (\$10,000).

¹³ “State panel orders replacement of couplings,” *Dallas Morning News*, November 7, 2007.

¹⁴ “Pipeline to Profit: Rate Hikes Meant to Boost Infrastructure Aid Gas Firm,” *Dallas Morning News*, August 20, 2013.

¹⁵ “Condemning Land to Build Pipeline Upheld,” *Dallas Morning News*, August 28, 2013.

¹⁶ [“Landowners and Pipelines Look to Legislature for Eminent Domain Reform,”](#) StateImpact Texas, April 17, 2013. See also another failed bill, [HB 2748](#).

¹⁷ [“Tax-Break Recipients Give Combs \\$238,500,”](#) TPJ’s *Lobby Watch*, May 15, 2013.

¹⁸ “Common Ground: Détente for Plaintiffs, Defense Lawyers at Lege,” *Texas Lawyer*, June 3, 2013.

¹⁹ “The Cost Conundrum: What a Texas town Can Teach Us About Health Care,” *New Yorker*, June 1, 2009.

²⁰ “Radiologists to Ask Legislators to Settle Dispute Over Scans,” *Austin American-Statesman*, January 8, 2009. Recently the Government Accountability Office found that doctors invested in radiation centers are more likely to prescribe radiation for prostate cancer. See “Doctors Who Profit From Radiation Prescribe It More Often, Study Finds,” *New York Times*, August 9, 2013.

²¹ “Texas Leads Nation in Uninsured,” *Austin American-Statesman*, August 30, 2013.

²² [“Q&A With Rep. John Zerwas,”](#) *Texas Observer*, August 2, 2013.

²³ [“Optometrists Seek Negotiating Power with Insurers,”](#) *New York Times/Texas Tribune*, April 20, 2013.

²⁴ The Texas Health Care Association made this plea in a full-page ad in the *Austin American-Statesman* on April 16, 2013.

²⁵ [“A Texas Senate Bill Would Revise State’s End-of-Life Procedure,”](#) *New York Times/Texas Tribune*, March 30, 2013.

²⁶ [HB 1464](#) and [SB 675](#), respectively.

²⁷ “Big Grant Not Reviewed,” *Dallas Morning News*, November 30, 2012.

²⁸ [“GOP Lawmakers Work to Prove Conservative Cred,”](#) *Texas Tribune*, May 17, 2012.

²⁹ “Murky Land Deals Mark Gov. Rick Perry’s Past,” *Dallas Morning News*, July 25, 2010.

³⁰ “Veterans of Lawsuit Reform Turn to Education,” *Austin American-Statesman*, February 18, 2013. An attorney with the smaller, less strident business-tort PAC, the Texas Civil Justice League, recently said, “The major tort reform stuff is probably done.” “Common Ground: Détente for Plaintiffs, Defense Lawyers at Lege,” *Texas Lawyer*, June 3, 2013.

³¹ Sinquefield founded a conservative think tank called the Show-Me Institute. A judge sentenced a former employee of the institute to seven years in prison for embezzling more than \$650,000. “Marcia Jackson: Woman Who Embezzled from Show-Me Institute Gets Seven Years,” *River Front Times*, January 21, 2011. “Grand Jury Investigating Fraud at Show-Me Insitute,” *River Front Times*, February 26, 2010.

³² Technically, Conservative Republicans of Texas supported Smitherman, not the Conservative Republicans of Harris County. Yet the tens of thousands of dollars exchanged between these inbred PACs renders the distinction meaningless.

³³ Sen. Rodney Ellis and Reps. Alma Allen, Carol Alvarado, Garnet Coleman, Borris Miles, Senfronia Thompson and Sylvester Turner. It also attacked Kevin Risner, whom future Rep. Mary Ann Perez beat in the Democratic Primary.

³⁴ [“Allegations of dirty Politics Arise in Civil Court Judge Race,”](#) *KHOU 11 News*, May 18, 2012. Back to Basics spent \$4,000 on robo-calls opposing Palmer.

-
- ³⁵ [“In Texas Trial Lawyers Sink Money into GOP Races,”](#) *Texas Tribune*, June 1, 2012.
- ³⁶ “Insurance Overhaul Talks Stall,” *Austin American-Statesman*, May 29, 2011. “Texas Legislature Passes Education Cuts, TWIA Bill,” Associated Press, *Palestine Herald*, June 30, 2011.
- ³⁷ Rep. Linda Harper-Brown did not receive all of this money directly from the PAC. The PAC also paid for some polls and printing materials ordered on her behalf.
- ³⁸ [“Different Poll, Opposite Result: Voters Support Metro Question,”](#) *Houston Chronicle*, July 30, 2012.
- ³⁹ “New ‘Super PAC’ Takes Aim at Incumbents,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 19, 2012.
- ⁴⁰ “New Anti-Income Tax Coalition Has Dark Money Ties,” Center for Responsive Politics, September 3, 2013.
- ⁴¹ “Reyes Slams Super PAC Targeting Incumbents,” *Texas Tribune*, February 13, 2012.
- ⁴² “Money Drives Water Projects,” *Austin American-Statesman*, February 19, 2013.
- ⁴³ “Spread of Hydrofracking Could Strain Water Resources in West, Study Finds,” *New York Times*, May 2, 2013.
- ⁴⁴ “Lawyers’ Ties in Edwards Case suggest Extent of Hiding Affair,” *New York Times*, August 15, 2008.
- ⁴⁵ Texans for Honesty also took \$25,000 from developer Harlan Crow and \$20,000 from Budweiser distributor John Nau.
- ⁴⁶ Texans for Honesty also paid \$8,000 for online services to Raconteur Media, another Patriot Group appendage.
- ⁴⁷ Engineer Bruce Hotze is the brother of Dr. Steven Hotze, another conservative activist.
- ⁴⁸ [“Advocates for Beer, Wine Sales Question Opposition's Campaign,”](#) KTAL, April 21, 2011.
- ⁴⁹ “Defamation Suit Puts New Law to the Test,” *New York Times/Texas Tribune*, June 16, 2012.