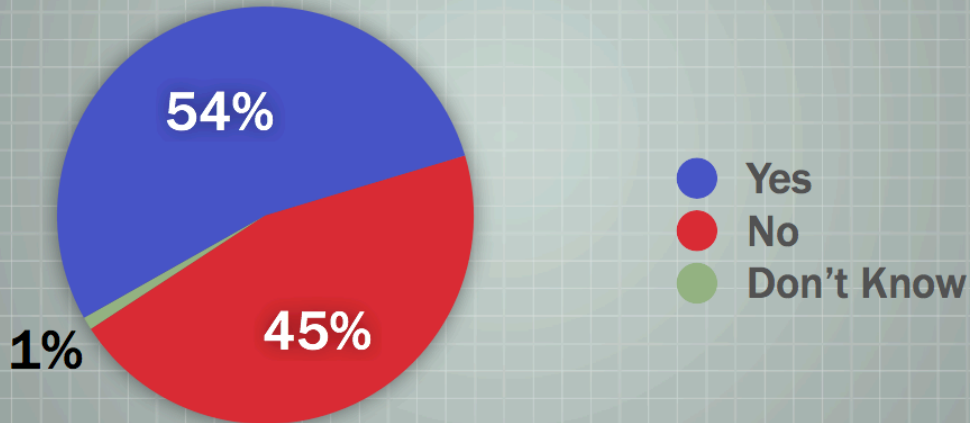


“INSIDE” INTELLIGENCE

*The Texas Weekly/Texas Tribune insider poll
for the week of October 14*

INSIDE INTELLIGENCE

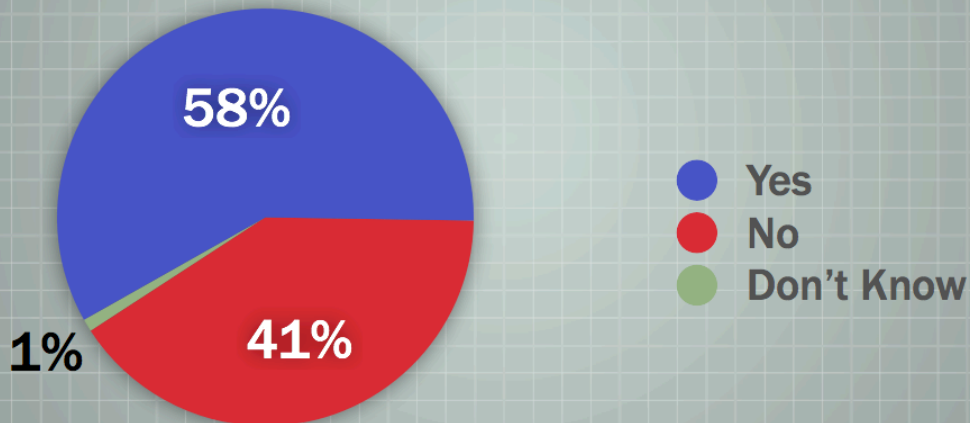
Should aggregate giving to federal candidates be limited?



Inside Intelligence is an informal survey of political and government insiders in Texas and is not meant to measure public opinion.

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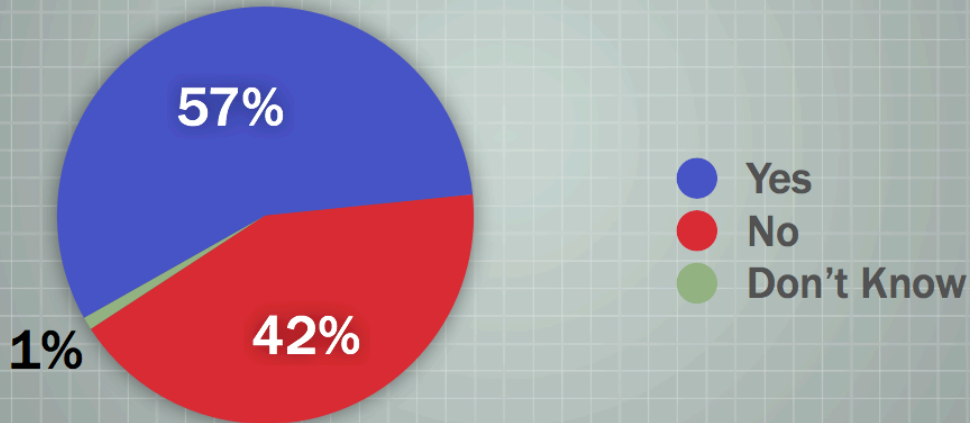
Should campaign contributions be limited in federal races?



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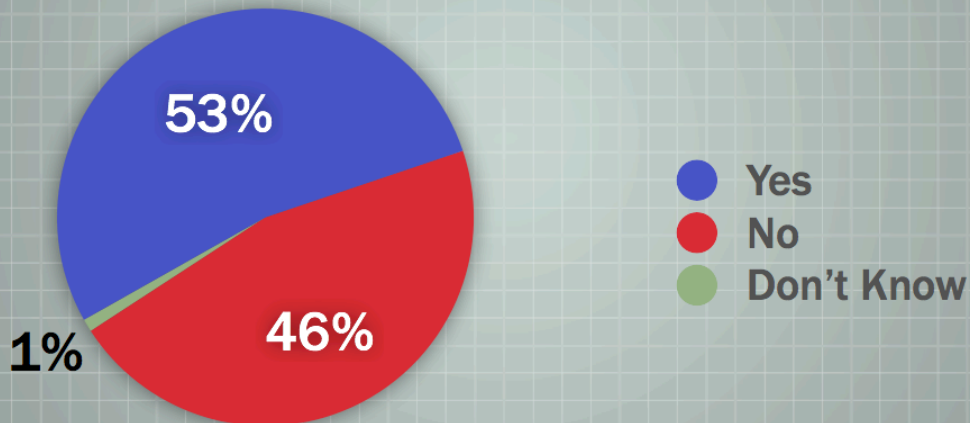
Should campaign contributions be limited in state races?



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Should corporations and unions be allowed to contribute to campaigns?



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Should federal law limit the aggregate amount that one individual can contribute to federal candidates?

- "I'm a political consultant...hell NO!"
- "Yes but only if you do away with super PACs and all those kinds of animals."
- "This opens the door to policies that are more 'fair' to some than to others."
- "Limitations will (unfortunately) now benefit the emergence of dark money groups that will form as a result of such limitations. Better to have massive contributions reported and visible than the alternative."
- "But the limit of \$2,600 to individual candidates is more important than the aggregate limit."
- "The limit on the number of federal races to which I can contribute is a violation of my constitutional right to participate in the electoral process. Soon SCOTUS will educate everyone."
- "Limit what you can do with your money and you limit your freedom"
- "Limiting contributions is the only way to break the loop of concentrated wealth leading to concentrated power, which leads to more concentrated wealth, etc. Except, of course, that it's already too late."
- "Immediate, full disclosure should be required."
- "Silly rule. It should be junked."
- "Disclose, disclose, disclose. Make it easy to see who is being bought and by whom!"
- "No, because they just recess into the darkness and set up outside organizations to send their contributions too."
- "Super PAC's have fostered super secrets. Lift the limit and create more transparency."
- "Lower the asking price."
- "Many of your insiders are the very people making and benefitting from these federal and state contributions. Reader beware."
- "The \$2600 cap per candidate is meant to limit the influence any one donor has on a candidate."
- "Federal limits are clearly meaningless at this point. All campaign finance reforms should come in the form of transparency. The minute a check is deposited to a campaign, that information should be available to the public."
- "All that should be required is full and immediate disclosure. Campaign finance limitations will never work as long as there is a First Amendment."
- "Interesting concept - then officeholders will have to compete amongst themselves for 'favorite' status. I do like the impact of aggregate limits with regard to limiting the number of officeholders beholden to a single contributor. Could empower fundraisers to coordinate giving between like-minded contributors..."

- "The conceit that money is speech results in plutocracy and diminishes the importance of the citizenry."
- "So long as contributions to specific candidates are subject to limits, there should not be aggregate limitations."
- "Should welcome donations that get reported and encourage people to give to groups that report, not 527's or non reporting shadow groups."
- "It does not matter what limit is imposed. There will always be ways to get around those limits (and both sides - Ds and Rs - privately like it that way)."
- "There is no reason to permit incumbents to stipulate how many candidates can receive contributions of a size that Congress itself has deemed innocuous."

Should federal law limit campaign contributions in presidential and congressional races?

- "Again, why would you want to take food away from my children. This is how I make a living. He'll NO!"
- "Limits should be placed on ALL kinds of money, as opposed to just individual money."
- "See above"
- "In today's age of social media and 24/7 news coverage, money doesn't have the same advantage it did when Buckley v. Valeo was decided."
- "No limits, immediate disclosure"
- "Every time Congress makes a show of limiting campaign contributions, the money shows up somewhere else. It's like squeezing a balloon."
- "Immediate, full disclosure should be required."
- "No limits with full transparency. Where a candidate gets her money is very telling."
- "It may have made sense when there was public financing, but that never existed for congressional races (look at Gov. Dewhurst and Cong. McCaul) and no longer exists in practice for Presidential (Pres. Bush declined for the Primaries, and President Obama has never taken a penny). Plus, big money is flowing to Super PACs, leaving candidates without control of their message."
- "See above."
- "No, because they just recess into the darkness and set up outside organizations to send their contributions too."
- "Lower the asking price."
- "Either that, or let only billionaires and large corporations decide the outcomes of federal races."
- "Disclosure of contributions is more important, and the bottom line is to assure confidence in the electoral process. Unlimited spending by

undisclosed interests undermines that confidence."

- "The system is already in place and seems to work to limit the influence of any one donor."
- "Same answer as above. Ironically, federal campaign limits require presidential and congressional candidates to spend far too much time at fundraisers talking to folks who can write a \$2K check and less time to get out and talk to actual people. In Texas, our statewide candidates don't spend an inordinate amount of time at big fundraisers because they don't need to."

• "All that should be required is full and immediate disclosure."

- "Yes. Limitations help level the field."
- "Encourage people to give to groups that report, not 527's or non reporting shadow groups. Let campaigns be defined by where they get their money."
- "If you limit them, don't complain about all the fundraisers (above the many already necessary) that will be needed to win and keep a seat."

Should the state limit contributions to political candidates?

• "Wearing my political consultant hat I would ask why anyone would want to do that. Wearing my lobbyist hat I would say YES, PLEASE! Wait...as a consultant who lobbies I'm more inclined to say hell NO!"

• "See above"

• "Dewhurst has shown that money alone won't win races. Limiting contributions won't equalize the field-ideas and good old fashioned campaign work does that."

• "Immediate disclosure"

• "It is ugly system that the average voter has no idea how it really works."

• "100% conflicted here: 1. I don't like limits on contributions, but 2. I don't like \$500 floors to get in the door."

• "No more than the state should limit the other forms of freedom of expression."

• "Immediate, full disclosure should be required."

• "I like Texas law, in that you can give as much as you want. Maybe as a lobbyist I should say it should be limited to save money, but hey, money is speech. Darn First Amendment..."

• "No, because they just recess into the darkness and set up outside organizations to send their contributions too."

• "At least as low as federal levels. Lower the asking price."

• "As things stand today, we have legalized bribery."

- "While campaigns would look substantially different, office holders would appear less beholden to a handful of rich donors."
- "What an absolutely crazy idea. What we have learned from the federal system -- from several decades of watching the federal system -- is that money will flow to both sides regardless of the rules that are put in place. Remember, PAC's were the result of post-Watergate reforms and every campaign finance reform since then has been a re-action to whatever workaround emerged from the prior reform. All these reforms do is make it

harder to figure out who is giving the money to candidates, which is basically all we want to know."

- "Would sure be nice for those of us in the game."
- "Should welcome donations that get reported and encourage people to give to groups that report, not 527's or non reporting shadow groups."
- "Campaign contribution limits always work in favor of the incumbent. Why give incumbents another advantage?"

Should corporations and unions be allowed to contribute to political campaigns?

- "There are a lot of young men and women trying to put themselves through college working on political campaigns. Campaigns need the money to help these young men and women."
- "They already do thru loopholes."
- "With limitations on amounts, because of the lack of transparency as to who is behind the corporate decision to give"
- "Taxation without representation?"
- "As long as contributions are disclosed and out in the open, why set a limit? If a certain politician/candidate is in the pocket of one person/corporation/union or a small group of people/corps/unions, then the voters will take that into account"
- "They should be allowed but with limits placed on all contributors."
- "Let all people/corporations/unions give, and let the candidates report it."
- "Immediate, full disclosure should be required. The public is smart enough to figure out who is bought and paid for, and who is not."
- "You have set up a false parity by comparing unions to corporations. You also need a 'none of the above' option. I answered 'don't know' but what I really meant to answer was 'none of the above.' I think unions should be able to contribute to candidates, but corporations should not. In at-work state such as Texas, you have to proactively join a union. You also know when you pay money to a union that you are paying for advocacy. This is not the case with corporations. When you pay money to a corporation, it's generally for the use

of a product. I have no faith that the Exxon Corporation represents my interests, even though I buy their gasoline. I may have more faith that a union represents my interests, if I'm voluntarily paying dues. I see unions more akin to political action committees and the similar restrictions should apply for both."

- "Most of the corporations that will give are privately held, not the publicly traded types. Exxon won't give, but a car dealer will. Plus, how does it make sense to allow a LLC to contribute when a corporation can't? Answer: it doesn't."
- "Why not?!?"
- "Both corporations and unions or neither."
- "No to corporations. Yes to unions representing their members but limits."
- "They do indirectly, so why not just let them contribute directly and report it for all to see."
- "Not direct, through a transparent PAC"
- "They aren't people."
- "Despite the Supreme Court, corporations and unions are not citizens."
- "As long as there is disclosure anyone should be able to contribute."
- "Of course they should. (Has someone from the League of Women Voters snuck into the Texas Trib office and hijacked the Inside Intelligence Survey Monkey?) This is settled law."

Those who have something to say shall have a voice in our political games. What we should require is that corporations and unions put their name on everything they fund -- so a campaign to give raises to low performing teachers, which is paid for by the Teachers Unions, for example, isn't named something like Local Parents for Good Schools. Every side has several of these deceptively named groups, which is what makes folks cynical. Folks should say who they are and what they are for. Teachers for More Money. Big Business for More Tax Breaks. Let the voters decide."

- "Both already do contribute, in various ways."
- "Yes, with limits and full transparency"
- "With limits."
- "Corporate and union contributions must be limited and transparent."
- "Political campaigns have become obscenely expensive. The high costs of campaigns puts the candidates and elected officials in continual fundraising mode."
- "With limits on contribution levels and oversight for compliance to those limits."
- "Because this inserts a layer of secrecy, should not be allowed, nor should non reporting shadow groups be allowed to give."
- "Yes, unless you are a tax-exempt entity. If a corporation/ union doesn't have to pay taxes, then it shouldn't get to spend money in campaigns. If it

wants to get involved in political campaigns, than it should submit to the tax man like the rest of us!"

- "Corporations are people, remember? And sometimes unions are people too."

- "With Limitations"

- "They should have to disclose their donors and the amounts each donated, and their contributions should be limited."

- "With contribution limits."

- "And report them regardless of where the go.... 501's included"

Our thanks to this week's participants: Gene Acuna, Cathie Adams, Brandon Aghamalian, Jenny Aghamalian, Victor Alcorta, Clyde Alexander, George Allen, Jay Arnold, Louis Bacarisse, Charles Bailey, Dave Beckwith, Andrew Biar, Allen Blakemore, Tom Blanton, Chris Britton, Blaine Bull, David Cabrales, Lydia Camarillo, Kerry Cammack, Marc Campos, Thure Cannon, Snapper Carr, Janis Carter, Corbin Casteel, William Chapman, Elizabeth Christian, Elna Christopher, Chad Crow, Beth Cubriel, Randy Cubriel, Denise Davis, Hector De Leon, June Deadrick, Nora Del Bosque, Holly DeShields, Richard Dyer, Jeff Eller, Jack Erskine, Gay Erwin, John Esparza, Jon Fisher, Neftali Garcia, Dominic Giarratani, Eric Glenn, Kinnan Golemon, Daniel Gonzalez, Jim Grace, John Greytok, Jack Gullahorn, Clint Hackney, Anthony Haley, Wayne Hamilton, Bill Hammond, Richard Hardy, Ken Hodges, Laura Huffman, Deborah Ingersoll, Cal Jillson, Jason Johnson, Mark Jones, Robert Jones, Lisa Kaufman, Robert Kepple, Tom Kleinworth, Dale Laine, Nick Lampson, Pete Laney, Dick Lavine, Leslie Lemon, Vilma Luna, Matt Mackowiak, Luke Marchant, Phillip Martin, Matt Matthews, Dan McClung, Mike McKinney, Debra Medina, Robert Miller, Bee Moorhead, Mike Moses, Steve Murdock, Keir Murray, Nelson Nease, Keats Norfleet, Pat Nugent, Todd Olsen, Nef Partida, Gardner Pate, Robert Peeler, Jerry Philips, Tom Phillips, Wayne Pierce, Allen Place, Royce Poinsett, Gary Polland, Jay Pritchard, Bill Ratliff, Brian Rawson, Karen Reagan, Tim Reeves, Patrick Reinhart, David Reynolds, Boyd Richie, Kim Ross, Grant Ruckel, Jason Sabo, Andy Sansom, Stan Schlueter, Bruce Scott, Robert Scott, Steve Scurlock, Ben Sebree, Jason Skaggs, Ed Small, Martha Smiley, Todd Smith, Larry Soward, Leonard Spearman, Dennis Speight, Tom Spilman, Jason Stanford, Bob Strauser, Colin Strother, Michael Quinn Sullivan, Sherry Sylvester, Jay Thompson, Trey Trainor, Vicki Truitt, Corbin Van Arsdale, Ware Wendell, David White, Darren Whitehurst, Seth Winick, Peck Young, Angelo Zottarelli.