

U.S. Chamber of Commerce Protest Media Clips

The Washington Post – Oct. 19, 2012

[Corporate donors fuel Chamber of Commerce's political power](#)

"Advocacy groups — including U.S. PIRG, Public Citizen, the Business Ethics Network and Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington — are calling for more mandatory disclosure. The pro-disclosure groups will mark the 100th birthday of the chamber at 11 a.m. Friday with a protest and rally outside the chamber's grand Beaux Arts headquarters facing the White House."

National Journal – Oct. 19, 2012

[Passive-Aggressive Birthday Wishes to the Chamber](#)

So far, the Chamber has spent \$27,239,056 on the 2012 election, though it reportedly plans to spend \$100 million on congressional races in this cycle.

"The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the poster child for Citizens United. They are the poster child for the unaccountable big money that's spreading secrets and lies through our democracy and corroding our right to self government," Blair Bowie of U.S. PIRG said.

Huffington Post – Oct. 24, 2012

[Outside Groups, Super PACs Flood Senate Races With Cash From Undisclosed Donors](#)

"The Chamber is the primary conduit for all of this corporate money coming into campaigns," Weissman said at an Oct. 19 press event held in opposition to the Chamber's practices. "The Chamber has its own institutional interest in soliciting, obtaining and spending these contributions. The Chamber's base of power to a considerable extent depends on being able to maintain the secrecy around campaign spending."

Portland Press Herald – Oct. 20, 2012

[Child-care provider from Falmouth calls on chamber to reveal donors](#)

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has spent more than \$1.3 million so far on political advertising in Maine's U.S. Senate race -- opposing independent Angus King or supporting Republican Charlie Summers -- and has pledged to spend as much as \$100 million nationwide on the 2012 elections.

The Business Journals – Oct. 24, 2012

[U.S. Chamber dominates election spending by business groups](#)

Liberal groups have blasted the chamber for its political spending, particularly because the organization doesn't release the names of its corporate donors. Public Citizen, the American Sustainable Business Council and other groups held a rally last Friday across the street from the chamber's Washington, D.C. headquarters, calling on it to disclose its donors.

Roll Call – Oct. 19, 2012

[Liberal Groups Protest U.S. Chamber's Election Spending](#)

Kennebec Journal- Oct. 20, 2012

[Child-care provider from Falmouth calls on chamber to reveal donors](#)

The Morning Sentinel – Oct. 19, 2012

[Rally targets U.S. Chamber political spending in Maine, nation](#)

Corporate Crime Reporter – Oct. 19, 2012

[Groups Call on Chamber to Open Up](#)

New Poll: Americans condemn high levels of corporate political spending, overwhelmingly support strong transparency and accountability reforms

Nearly 9 in 10 Americans agree that there is way too much corporate money in politics, and 51 percent strongly agree, according to a new poll released today by the Corporate Reform Coalition. The survey, conducted by Bannon Communications, found overwhelming support for strong, common sense reforms to ensure transparency and accountability for corporate political spending.

- 81 percent of Americans agree that companies should only spend money on political campaigns if they disclose their spending immediately; 80 percent agree that companies should only spend money on political campaigns if they get prior shareholder approval.
- Huge majorities of Americans across the political spectrum condemn corporate political spending and support strong reforms. For example, requiring corporations to get shareholder approval before spending money on politics is supported by 73 percent of both Republicans and Democrats, and 71 percent of Independents.
- 84 percent of Americans agree that corporate political spending drowns out the voices of average Americans, and 83 percent believe that corporations and corporate CEOs have too much political power and influence.

More than 8 in 10 Americans (81%) believe that the secret flow of campaign spending is bad for democracy, and 87 percent agree that prompt disclosure of political spending would help voters, customers and shareholders hold companies accountable for political behavior. Unfortunately, the sources of corporate funds directed through third party intermediaries like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce remain largely hidden.

Americans are strongly in favor of common sense, achievable reforms that would increase transparency and accountability for corporate political spending, fight corruption, and lead to a more responsive and representative government.

- 77% of Americans support a requirement that companies publicly disclose their contributions to groups - like the U.S. Chamber - that funnel money into politics.
- 74% of Americans support a plan allowing candidates to run for Congress without raising large contributions by collecting small contributions and receiving limited public funds.
- 74% of Americans favor requiring that the name of the company and its CEO appear in ads paid for by corporate political spending.

Finally, Americans are ready to act to prevent their voices from being drowned out by corporate political spending. To protest a company's political spending, 79% would refuse to buy a company's product or services and 76% would sign a petition to the SEC supporting corporate disclosure.

"Americans deserve a democracy in which all people are equal and all voices are heard, not one where corporations can spend secret millions and create dependencies so our elected

representatives are beholden to their interests,” said Liz Kennedy, Counsel at Demos, whose analysis of the poll results can be read [here](#). “Americans have a right to know who is trying to buy our elections, and the time is long since past to enact strong, common sense requirements to ensure transparency and accountability.

“Secret corporate spending is appalling in a representative democracy, and this poll shows that the public agrees. One key remedy - critical for shareholders whose investments allow corporations to generate massive profits - is that the SEC move forward on issuing rules to require publicly traded companies to disclose their political spending,” said Lisa Gilbert, Director of Public Citizen’s Congress Watch division.

“This poll reflects what we are seeing at the state level,” said Susannah Goodman, Director of Corporate Accountability at Common Cause. “Americans are fed up with secret corporate spending. They are ready to take action -- boycotts, divesting stock, signing petitions, protests - whatever it takes to send a strong message to corporations to keep their money out of our elections.”

“The American people agree: money does not equal speech. But the Roberts’ court need not have the last word here. Though our pension funds and through regulators like the Securities and Exchange Commission, we can shed light on shadowy corporate spending in our elections. It’s time our rules and our laws matched the will of the people,” said CAPS Founder NYC Public Advocate Bill de Blasio.

“Americans across the political spectrum have long held transparency in campaign finance to be crucial to the success of democracy. This poll shows that the public wants to close the backdoors to secret political spending. Americans are ready to take action to bring secret corporate spending to the light and to hold accountable those companies – and their conduits like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce - who attempt to hide their spending” said Blair Bowie, Democracy Advocate at the U.S. Public Interest Research Group.

“Since Citizens United, nearly every poll that has asked about money in politics has shown that Americans are fed up with the amount of influence that money can buy. Those feelings have only gotten stronger during this election season that has been dominated by undisclosed corporate spending. Simple corporate disclosure measures aren’t just the right thing to do – they’re overwhelmingly supported by voters,” said Margery F. Baker, Executive Vice President for Policy and Program, People for the American Way.

Public Citizen, Demos, Common Cause, the Coalition for Accountability in Political Spending, U.S. PIRG, Greenpeace, People For the American Way, Public Campaign, Service Employees International Union, New Progressive Alliance, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, Main Street Alliance, Alliance for a Just Society, Green Century Capital Management, NorthStar Asset Management, Inc., West Virginia Citizen Action Group, Friends of the Earth, Corporate Accountability International, Corporate Ethics International/ Business Ethics Network, and the Responsible Endowments Coalition work together as part of the broader Corporate Reform Coalition to bring transparency and accountability to corporate political spending.

Bannon Communications Research interviewed a randomly and scientifically selected group of 804 Americans who are 18 and over. The sample is based on demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau to reflect age, area and gender distributions in the 2010 count. The margin of error for the entire national sample is plus or minus 3.8%. BCR conducted the interviewing on October 8- October 10, 2012. Brad Bannon of Bannon Communications can be reached at 202-320-4182 or brad@bannoncr.com.

Resources:

Read the Executive Summary from Bannon: <http://pubc.it/CRPoll>

Read the Topline results: <http://pubc.it/CRDaTA>

Read Demos' Analysis of the Poll Results: <http://demos.io/citizensactuallyunited>

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