

# Buying the Congress: Lobbying and Campaign Spending Data

**Who Does Congress Represent?** Contributions to candidates, political parties and PACS  
(2004 data: from *Open Secrets.org*, compiled from *Center for Responsive Politics*)

Business groups - \$991M / 58% of total  
Unions - \$61M / 3.6%  
Lawyers & lobbyists - \$210M / 12.3%  
Ideological - \$182M / 10.7%  
Other - \$261M / 15.2%

**Who contributes to campaigns:** Donor demographics - 2004, 2006

Percent of U.S. population giving \$200+ to any campaign:

2004 - .39%  
2006 - .27%

Percent giving \$2,000+

2004 - .09%  
2006 - .01%

**Examples of contributions by special interests:**

**Bankruptcy Reform**, an issue before the 109th Congress...

*Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention & Consumer Protection Act, HR 685 (in 2005)*

Finance & Credit Card firms - \$8.2M, in 2004 election cycle

*(contributions by individuals and PACs, American Bankers Assoc, etc.)*

**Health Care legislation** (e.g. Medicare Part D, which prevents negotiating lower prices)

Pharmaceutical industry - *(contributions by individuals and PACs)*

2000 - \$27M  
2002 - \$29.6M  
2008 (to date) - \$18M

Insurance industry -

2000 - \$41.6M  
2008 - \$31M (to date)

**Incumbent Advantage:** *(amounts raised/spent on campaigns)*

U.S. Senate: Incumbent avg \$7.9M vs. Challenger \$756K (Open seat - \$1.6M)

U.S. House: Incumbent avg \$1.02M vs. Challenger \$225K (Open seat - \$400K)

**Lobbying:** *(how many; how much did they spend ...)*

# of lobbyists - 10,689 (in 1998) - spent \$1.45B / 17,107 (in 2008) - spent \$1.58B

Top Industries, lobbying expenditures:

Pharmaceuticals / Health: 2007 - \$228M / 2008 - \$112.7M (to date)  
Insurance industry lobbyists: 2007 - \$135M / 2008 - \$76M (to date)

---

*Data source on federal lobbying & campaign spending: <http://www.opensecrets.org>  
This sheet compiled by Washington Public Campaigns, [www.washclean.org](http://www.washclean.org) (9-14-08)*

# QUOTES on Money and Politics

## ***From Robert F. Kennedy:***

"OUR DEMOCRACY is broken because of our campaign finance system, which is just a system of legalized bribery, which has allowed corporations and the very wealthy to control the electoral results.

The first thing we need to do is to restore American Democracy. Fix the campaign finance system to get corporate money out of the electoral process.

Corporations are a great thing for our country. They drive our economy but they should NOT be running our government because they don't want the same thing for America that Americans want. Corporations don't want democracy, they want free markets, they want profits, and oftentimes the easiest path to profits is to use the campaign finance system to get their hooks into a public official and to use that public official to dismantle the marketplace to give them monopoly control and a competitive edge and to privatize the commons—to steal our air, our water, or our public treasury, and liquidate it for private profits."

## ***From Bill Moyer:***

"OUR ELECTIONS are bought out from under us and our public officials do the bidding of mercenaries. Money is choking democracy to death. So powerfully has wealth shaped our political agenda that we cannot say America is working for all of America.

In the words of Louis Brandeis, one of the greatest of our Supreme Court justices: 'You can have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, or democracy, but you cannot have both'.

There are no victimless crimes in politics. The cost of corruption is passed on to you. When the government of the United States falls under the thumb of the powerful and privileged, regular folks get squashed."