



THE “FOUR TOPS” PARTY ON

POLITICAL PARTIES & LEGISLATIVE CAUCUSES
WOULD BE EXEMPT FROM PROPOSED
CONTRIBUTION LIMITS IN ILLINOIS

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ILLINOIS IS ONE OF ONLY SIX¹ STATES WITH NO RESTRICTIONS ON CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS TO candidates. The state now is inching closer to campaign-finance reform. State officials re-examined ethics laws over the past year following the arrest and impeachment of former Gov. Rod Blagojevich, a Democrat who is accused of attempting to sell the U.S. Senate seat left vacant by the election of President Barack Obama.² Gov. Patrick Quinn, the Democratic lieutenant governor who replaced Blagojevich, vetoed a reform bill in August at the request of legislative leaders³ after critics claimed the effort was full of loopholes and did not create meaningful reform.⁴

Last week, Illinois Speaker of the House Michael Madigan, a Democrat, proposed a new campaign-finance reform bill that passed the House Executive Committee on a 7-4 party-line vote.⁵ The proposed bill limits contributions from individuals, corporations, labor unions and political action committees — but allows unlimited contributions from political parties and legislative caucuses.^{6 7} The main reform advocate, CHANGE Illinois, will not support legislation that does not limit these party contributions. The coalition previously indicated a willingness to negotiate with legislative leaders to lower other contribution limits in exchange for party committee limits.⁸ Gov. Quinn has not commented on the Madigan bill or whether he supports limits on party committee contributions.

An analysis of contributions to Illinois legislative candidates reveals that party sector giving was the largest identified source of campaign contributions between 2006 and 2008. Overall, political party donations accounted for 20 percent of money raised by legislative candidates. Contributions from political party committees and legislative caucuses comprised 16 percent of total contributions. Party sector money also includes contributions from candidate campaign committees, leadership PACs, and candidates' personal contributions to their own or other campaigns.

Contributions from political party committees and legislative caucuses comprised 16 percent of total contributions

¹ According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, Illinois, Missouri, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah and Virginia do not place any limits on campaign contributions. <http://www.ncsl.org/LegislaturesElections/ElectionsCampaigns/CampaignContributionLimitsOverview/tabid/16594/Default.aspx>

² Douglas Belkin, "Campaign-Finance Overhaul Falters in Illinois," *Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 9, 2009, available from <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125504586832874797.html>, accessed Oct. 18, 2009.

³ "Governor's Message," House Bill 0007, available from <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=09600HB0007gms&GA=96&SessionId=76&DocType=HB&LegID=39855&DocNum=7&GAID=10&Session=>, accessed Oct. 18, 2009.

⁴ Abdus M. Pallasch, "Gov. Quinn Vetoes Campaign Finance Reform Bill," *Chicago Sun Times*, Aug. 28, 2009, available from http://press.senaterepublicancaucus.com/news/full_article/106144?request=http%3A%2F%2Fpress.senaterepublicancaucus.com%2F%3Fpage=3, accessed Oct. 18, 2009.

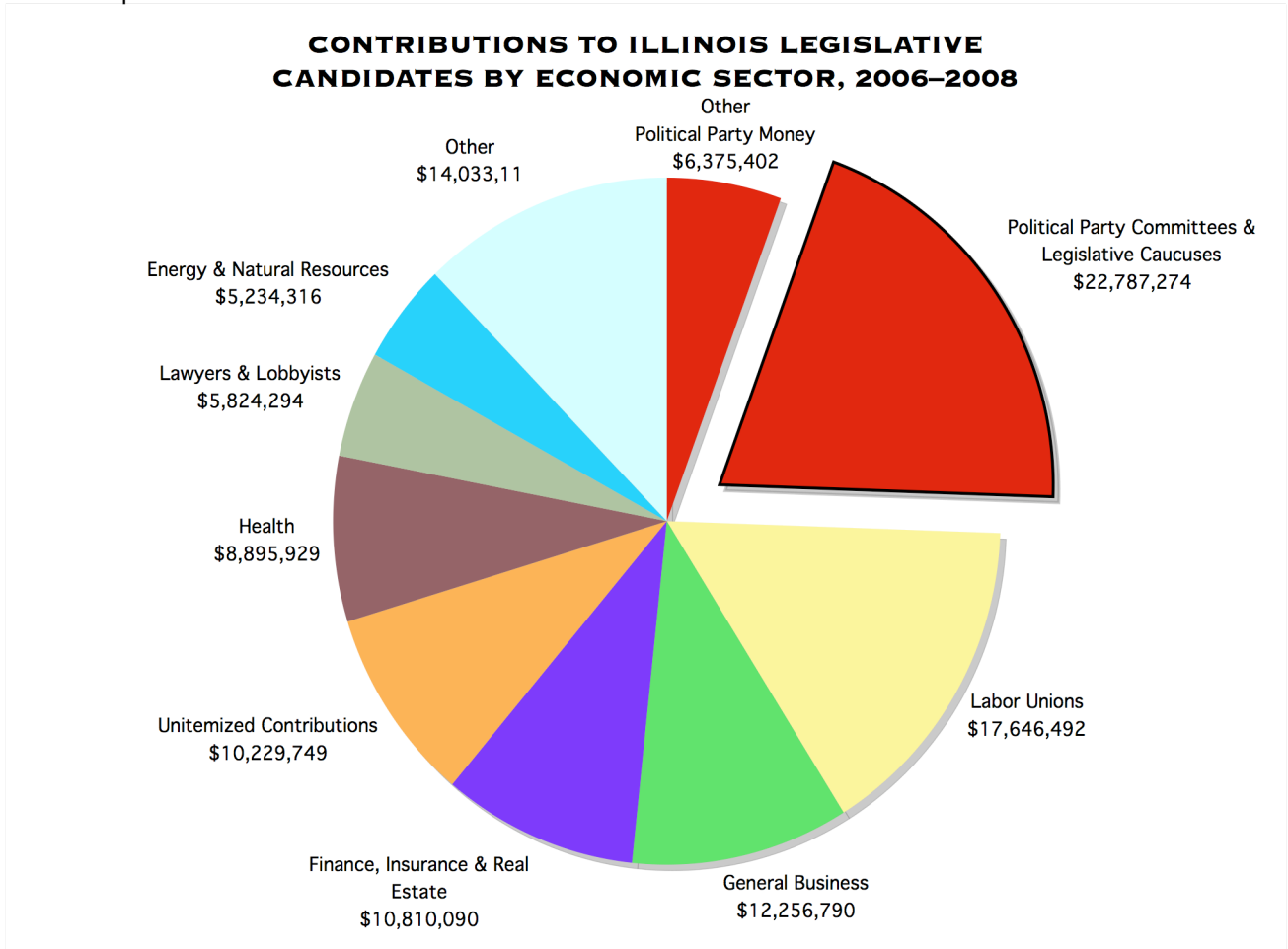
⁵ Ray Long and Monique Garcia, "Illinois Campaign Financing: Madigan Makes Stab at Reform," *Chicago Tribune*, Oct. 9, 2009, available from <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-campaign-finance-15-oct15,0,5279738.story>, accessed Oct. 18, 2009.

⁶ Legislative caucuses are committees organized by party and controlled by legislative leaders.

⁷ Douglas Belkin, "Campaign-Finance Overhaul Falters in Illinois," *Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 9, 2009, available from <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125504586832874797.html>, accessed Oct. 18, 2009.

⁸ "Campaign Finance Reform: Legislators Headed Back to Springfield with Little New on Plate," *Chicago Tribune*, Oct. 15, 2009, available from <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-illinois-reform-09oct09,0,5532716.story>, accessed Oct. 18, 2009.

Other sectors gave considerably smaller amounts: labor unions contributed 12.5 percent, business interests gave nearly 9 percent, and the finance, insurance, and real estate sector contributed nearly 9 percent.



Compared with other states, Illinois lawmakers received a relatively large share of their campaign contributions from political party sources. Illinois legislative candidates ranked 12th among the 50 states, with 16 percent of contributions coming from political party committees and legislative caucuses, or nearly \$22.8 million of \$141 million. Of the 11 states with higher rates of political party contributions, seven⁹ also do not limit political party contributions.¹⁰

In states where party contributions accounted for 15 percent or more of total donations,¹¹ the party controlling the legislature generally contributed more to legislative candidates than did the minority party.¹² For 2008 in Illinois, however, contributions from Republican party committees were greater than were Democratic party committee contributions, even though Democrats controlled the legislature (and will until the 2010 elections). Illinois Republican party committees contributed nearly \$5.5 million to legislative candidates in 2008, while their Democratic counterparts gave slightly less than \$5 million, a difference of \$505,718.

**POLITICAL PARTY AND LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS
CONTRIBUTIONS TO LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES BY STATE,
2006-2008¹³**

STATE	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS 2006-2008*	TOTAL PARTY & CAUCUS CONTRIBUTIONS	% OF TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	RANK
Alabama	\$42,586,340	\$2,029,973	4.8%	30
Alaska	\$9,284,152	\$788,253	8.5%	20
Arizona	\$15,103,618	\$4,778	0.03%	50
Arkansas	\$13,393,734	\$422,202	3.2%	36
California	\$253,850,259	\$41,300,209	16.3%	10
Colorado	\$16,722,721	\$635,312	3.8%	32
Connecticut	\$19,010,913	\$1,457,374	7.7%	23
Delaware	\$6,871,535	\$314,123	4.6%	31
Florida	\$86,638,470	\$8,517,185	9.8%	19
Georgia	\$43,738,555	\$417,641	0.95%	45
Hawaii	\$10,253,094	\$50,739	0.49%	46
Idaho	\$7,490,221	\$441,727	5.9%	28
Illinois	\$141,161,797	\$22,787,274	16.1%	12
Indiana	\$45,926,227	\$15,591,566	33.95%	3
Iowa	\$39,647,663	\$14,063,085	35.5%	1
Kansas	\$16,280,227	\$1,208,198	7.4%	24
Kentucky	\$20,134,092	\$3,866,081	19.2%	8

⁹ California, Iowa, Indiana, North Carolina, North Dakota, Pennsylvania and Virginia do not limit party contributions and these states ranked higher than Illinois in legislative candidates' share of party contributions.

¹⁰ "State Limits on Contributions to Candidates," *National Conference of State Legislatures*, April 30, 2009, available from <http://www.ncsl.org/LegislaturesElections/ElectionsCampaigns/CampaignContributionLimitsOverview/tabid/16594/Default.aspx>, accessed Oct. 18, 2009.

¹¹ The states where party contributions account for 15 percent or more of contributions are California, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Washington.

¹² The party controlling the legislature contributed more to legislative candidates overall in California, Iowa, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon and Washington in 2008. Democrats and Republicans split power in legislatures in Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

¹³ Figures include contributions made for state legislative elections held in 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008, as well as contributions to incumbents who were not up for re-election during those years.

STATE	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS 2006-2008*	TOTAL PARTY & CAUCUS CONTRIBUTIONS	% OF TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	RANK
Louisiana	\$47,177,699	\$1,732,420	3.7%	33
Maine	\$7,588,592	\$31,205	0.4%	47
Maryland	\$35,574,466	\$436,577	1.2%	44
Massachusetts	\$41,703,787	\$1,011,582	2.4%	40
Michigan	\$48,142,989	\$9,489,776	19.7%	6
Minnesota	\$22,824,238	\$1,351,582	5.9%	27
Mississippi	\$14,033,663	\$817,859	5.8%	29
Missouri	\$43,869,372	\$6,096,738	13.9%	16
Montana	\$4,993,781	\$166,699	3.3%	34
Nebraska	\$7,007,874	\$16,507	0.2%	49
Nevada	\$26,313,269	\$825,236	3.1%	37
New Hampshire	\$6,103,510	\$165,821	2.7%	39
New Jersey	\$70,111,194	\$8,155,772	11.6%	18
New Mexico	\$12,598,133	\$874,306	6.9%	25
New York	\$123,866,824	\$18,226,180	14.7%	14
North Carolina	\$59,649,121	\$11,862,416	19.9%	5
North Dakota	\$1,391,182	\$412,901	29.7%	4
Ohio	\$87,223,143	\$30,452,443	34.9%	2
Oklahoma	\$36,516,681	\$796,482	2.2%	41
Oregon	\$42,347,202	\$6,690,698	15.8%	13
Pennsylvania	\$142,826,624	\$27,430,117	19.2%	7
Rhode Island	\$8,794,231	\$132,363	1.5%	43
South Carolina	\$28,169,524	\$866,441	3.1%	38
South Dakota	\$6,539,889	\$947,229	14.5%	15
Tennessee	\$30,388,177	\$2,451,814	8.1%	22
Texas	\$185,843,744	\$5,881,333	3.2%	35
Utah	\$11,474,912	\$947,377	8.3%	21
Vermont	\$2,651,025	\$334,257	12.6%	17
Virginia	\$94,060,798	\$15,216,050	16.2%	11
Washington	\$42,161,437	\$7,072,587	16.8%	9
West Virginia	\$14,140,093	\$43,316	0.3%	48
Wisconsin	\$24,419,899	\$456,635	1.9%	42
Wyoming	\$1,956,308	\$129,708	6.6%	26

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