

# McCabe campaign: Principle Over Party campaign breaks 6 figures in 3-plus months relying on small donations

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Mike McCabe's Principle Over Party campaign for governor launched on September 12 and today reported bringing in over \$104,000 by the end of 2017 even though McCabe is not accepting any single donation over \$200 from supporters while state law allows candidates for governor in Wisconsin to take as much as \$20,000 from individuals and \$86,000 from political action committees.

"We have a plan to win and we will have the resources we need to carry out that plan," McCabe said.

The Commoners for Mike McCabe committee's year-end report to state election authorities lists 1102 contributions from 719 individuals. Supporters are allowed to give more than once but not more than \$200 at a time and no more than a total of \$1,000 for the entire campaign.

"We're grateful for the outpouring of support we've received from all across the state, but a campaign finance report does not reflect or measure the greatest

strength of our campaign – the extensive grassroots volunteer activity, neighbor-to-neighbor contact and direct voter outreach by the campaign,” McCabe said.

By the year’s end, the Principle Over Party campaign had already logged more than 37,000 miles just since McCabe made his candidacy official on September 12, traversing Wisconsin many times reaching out to voters in every part of the state. More than 130 stops were made along the way, including over 80 events that were open to the public and media. The campaign also held close to 60 neighborhood organizing meetings and volunteer trainings in communities across the state, and have dozens more lined up in coming weeks.

“These days candidates for office are told they have no choice but to spend four or five hours a day every single day raising money. We’re spending 10, 12, 14 hours a day raising a citizen army,” McCabe said. “Our campaign is a 21st Century version of how Bill Proxmire won statewide elections in Wisconsin for 30 years. Barnstorming the state. Pounding the pavement. Neighbors talking to neighbors.”

The way the Principle Over Party campaign is funded mirrors the values McCabe promoted for decades as an independent watchdog and reform advocate. In the mid-1990s, he helped start the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, a nonpartisan group that focuses on exposing the influence of big money in state government and works to make people matter more than money in politics. He led the group for 15 years as its director. He left the Democracy Campaign at the end of 2014 to start Blue Jean Nation, a grassroots citizens group working to organize people locally to challenge the political establishment to change its ways.

“The governor won’t be beaten with money. He’ll have way more than anyone,” McCabe said, noting that Democrats spent \$33 million in 2014, \$22 million in 2012 and \$12 million in 2010 in hopes of defeating Scott Walker only to see Republican forces vastly outspend them and Walker win by virtually identical margins in the three elections. “What he’s never faced is a genuinely people-powered grassroots crusade that creates a vivid contrast between the governor’s campaign bankrolled by billionaire tycoons and one that is truly of, by and for the people. For three elections now, Democrats have looked for a Goliath, but their Goliath has been beaten to a pulp by the far-larger Republican Goliath. Remember, it was David who defeated Goliath. It was David who brought down the giant.”

McCabe added: “For Wisconsin to become what it has the potential to be, the death grip of big money influence has to be broken and our state government must be

freed from the clutches of cronyism, corruption and what amounts to legal bribery of state officials.”

In its report of campaign activity through the end of 2017, Commoners for Mike McCabe reported fundraising totaling \$104,493.91 and expenses totaling \$83,336.64 with an ending balance of \$21,157.27. Loans from the candidate and his wife totaling \$25,000 to provided the campaign with start-up funding. The rest of the money raised came from individual contributions averaging \$72.