

Wisconsin Democracy Campaign: The big spenders in Wisconsin in 2 tables

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MADISON—The Wisconsin Democracy Campaign is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, and for the occasion, we've put together two tables to show you who the big players are in the political money game in Wisconsin.

[One table](#) shows you the top 25 individual contributors over the last 25 years. Number one on that table is Republican donor Dianne Hendricks (and her late husband Kenneth), who donated \$860,227. Of the top 25 donors, 19 are Republican and 6 are Democratic. Combined, the Republican donors gave \$6,982,137, and the Democratic donors gave \$2,448,949.

[Another table](#) shows the top special interest contributions over the last 25 years by category. All told, these special interest groups spent \$363 million in Wisconsin to elect candidates to do their bidding. The top 5 categories were:

1. Political/Ideological: \$45,443,000.
2. Retired, Homemakers, or Non-Income Earners: \$41,348,000.
3. Banking & Finance: \$23,855,000.
4. Manufacturing & Distributing: \$23,189,000.
5. Lawyers, Law Firms, and Lobbying \$22,159,000.

“What these tables show is politics in Wisconsin has become a game almost exclusively for the super rich and the special interests,” says Matt Rothschild, the executive director of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign. “The voice of the average Wisconsin citizen is getting drowned out under this tsunami of big money. And too often, our elected officials view their donors as their constituents – and not the citizens of Wisconsin.”

The [Wisconsin Democracy Campaign](#) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan watchdog that tracks and exposes money in politics and provides the premiere searchable database of campaign donations in the state. The group champions reforms such as full transparency, public financing of elections, amending the U.S. Constitution to overturn *Citizens United*, and banning gerrymandering. Its mission is to advocate for “ clean and open government and a full democracy, where everyone has an equal voice.”