

Report on Contributions to Super PACs Making Independent Expenditures in Maine *Federal* Elections

Prepared by Maia Cook for the Public Hearing on LD2232:

*An Act to Limit Contributions to Political Action
Committees That Make Independent Expenditures*

March 6, 2024

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Facts about the dataset

- The dataset used for this analysis was received from OpenSecrets
- This dataset only looks at contributions greater than or equal to \$5,000.
- This dataset look at Maine elections from 2010-2022.
- This dataset looks exclusively at Super PACs. It does not account for hybrid independent-expenditure-only groups, otherwise known as 'Carey Committees.'
- This analysis concerns unlimited contributions to committees that make independent expenditures, not the spending of these PACs.

Conclusions from the analysis

1. Independent money is playing an increasingly important role in modern elections.
2. The vast majority of independent money is out-of-state money.
3. Candidates are increasingly dependent on money from super PACs.

Responses to anticipated FAQs:

- Our analysis, and subsequent argument in favor of the proposed initiative, has *nothing* to do with limiting independent expenditures.
- It would be a mistake to infer that our argument opposes *Citizens United v. FEC*. We embrace the logic of *Citizens United v. FEC* to prove that contributions to super PACs should have limits *because* there is a risk of quid pro quo corruption.
- We are not challenging the First Amendment.

1 Summary Statistics of *Federal* Dataset

Table 1: Number of Contributions over \$5,000 to Super PACs per ME Cycle

Year	# Contributions
2010	149
2012	244
2014	1318
2016	775
2018	1922
2020	7143
2022	417

Table 2: Total Contributions to Super PACs per ME Cycle

Cycle	ContribTotal
2010	\$4,919,000
2012	\$21,162,880
2014	\$192,267,915
2016	\$148,501,150
2018	\$399,825,729
2020	\$1,478,892,397
2022	\$58,565,122

Table 3: Summary Statistics of Contributions (\$5,000+) Spent in ME Federal Elections, 2010-2022

Statistic	Value
Minimum	\$5,000
1st Quartile	\$5,000
Median	\$20,000
Mean	\$192,525
3rd Quartile	\$100,000
Maximum	\$27,500,000

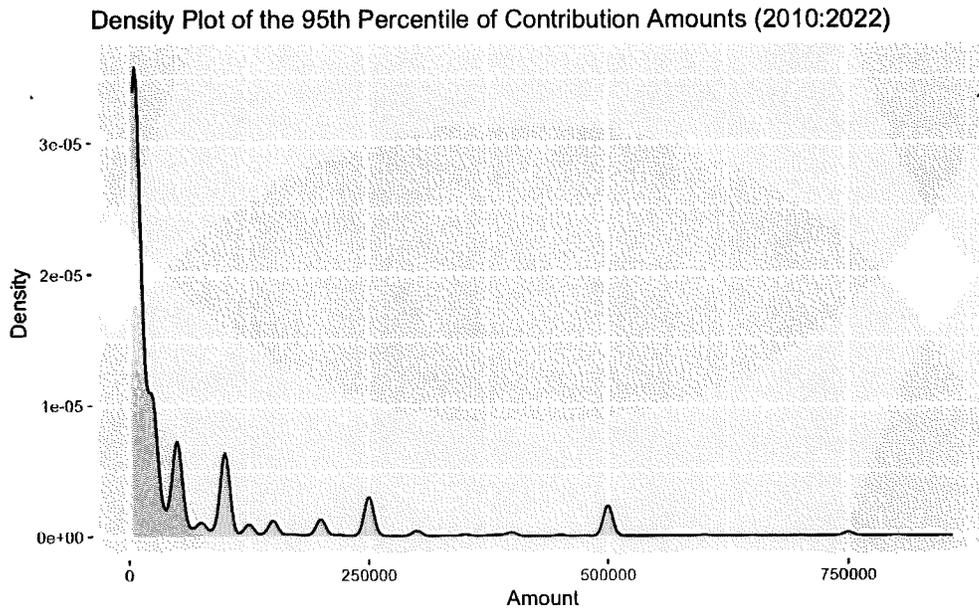


Figure 1: Density Plot of the 95th Percentile of Contribution Sizes

Note: I took the 95th percentile because the plot is illegible when massive outliers in the top 5% of contributions were included.

Time Series: Contributions to Super PACs for Maine Elections

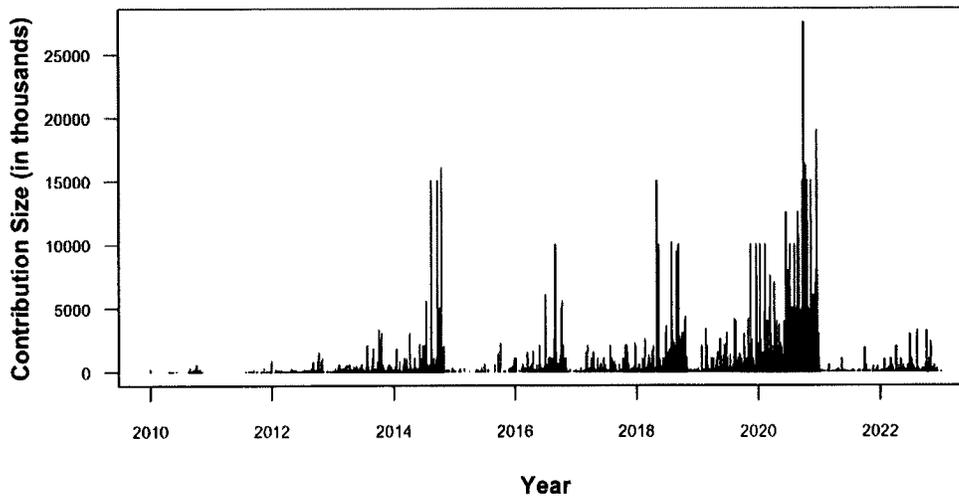


Figure 2: Time Series Analysis of Contributions from super PACs in Maine Federal Elections

2 Top 25 Contributors to Super PACs Spending in Maine Elections (2010-2022)

Table 4: Top 25 Contributors to Super PACs Spending in Maine Elections (2010-2022)

Rank	Contributor	Total Contributions
1	STEYER, THOMAS F	\$113,860,431
2	ADELSON, MIRIAM	\$98,750,000
3	ONE NATION	\$85,065,000
4	Senate Leadership Fund	\$80,170,000
5	ADELSON, SHELDON	\$68,750,000
6	AMERICAN ACTION NETWORK	\$57,716,526
7	MAJORITY FORWARD	\$53,323,000
8	MELLON, TIMOTHY	\$50,000,000
9	ADELSON, SHELDON G	\$40,000,000
10	GRIFFIN, KENNETH C	\$38,000,000
11	SCHWARZMAN, STEPHEN A	\$32,950,000
12	YASS, JEFF	\$32,068,000
13	NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS	\$30,603,098
14	UIHLEIN, RICHARD	\$27,500,000
15	EYCHANER, FRED	\$27,000,000
16	SIXTEEN THIRTY FUND	\$25,998,410
17	Working for Working Americans	\$24,015,000
18	NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION	\$23,814,149
19	AMERICA VOTES	\$21,826,500
20	LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS, INC	\$21,550,000
21	SUSSMAN, S DONALD	\$21,525,000
22	Democracy PAC	\$19,215,908
23	BLOOMBERG, MICHAEL	\$18,750,000
24	DUTY AND HONOR	\$15,900,000
25	NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION	\$15,000,000

3 Top 25 Super PACs making the Largest Independent Expenditures, (2010:2022))

Table 5: Top PACs by Total Independent Expenditures (2010-2022)

Rank	PAC	Total
1	Senate Majority PAC	\$27,907,444
2	Senate Leadership Fund	\$12,614,118
3	Congressional Leadership Fund	\$12,489,281
4	1820 PAC	\$10,387,507
5	House Majority PAC	\$8,321,477
6	Women Vote!	\$4,789,414
7	Family Friendly Action PAC	\$3,571,573
8	Maine Way PAC	\$3,550,404
9	Priorities USA Action	\$3,215,025
10	American Crossroads	\$2,207,856
11	National Assn of Realtors Congressional Fund	\$2,104,568
12	LCV Victory Fund	\$1,955,231
13	VoteVets.org	\$1,867,755
14	With Honor Fund	\$1,748,351
15	Planned Parenthood Votes	\$1,680,005
16	The Lincoln Project	\$1,675,944
17	Maine Liberty PAC	\$1,432,726
18	Change Now PAC	\$1,219,705
19	America First Action	\$1,089,171
20	Patients for Affordable Drugs Action	\$1,072,839
21	Future Forward USA	\$1,067,663
22	Club for Growth Action	\$841,713
23	Moderate PAC	\$749,160
24	Protect Freedom PAC	\$737,021
25	NEA Advocacy Fund	\$645,331

Note: *Total* refers to the total independent expenditures made by super PACs from 2010-2022. This is not looking at the total contributions to PACs from individuals, organizations, corporations, or labor unions. Verify this from Andrew

4 In vs Out-of-State Contributions

Table 6: Summary of Contribution Totals (2010-2022)

State	Total	Pct
In	\$7,116,000	0.003
Out	\$2,006,706,545	0.870
Unknown	\$290,311,648	0.125
Grand Total	\$2,304,134,193	1.000

Table 7: Contributions to Super PACs per Cycle

Cycle	Total Contributions	Pct OutState
2010	\$4,919,000	0.712
2012	\$21,162,880	0.977
2014	\$192,267,915	0.908
2016	\$148,501,150	0.872
2018	\$399,825,729	0.888
2020	\$1,478,892,397	0.868
2022	\$58,565,122	0.693
Total	\$2,302,134,193	-

Note: The discrepancy in the Grand Total values between Table 6 and Table 7 can be explained by the fact that 9% of the data was not available for Table 7's out-of-state analysis.

Summary of Contribution Totals (2010-2022)

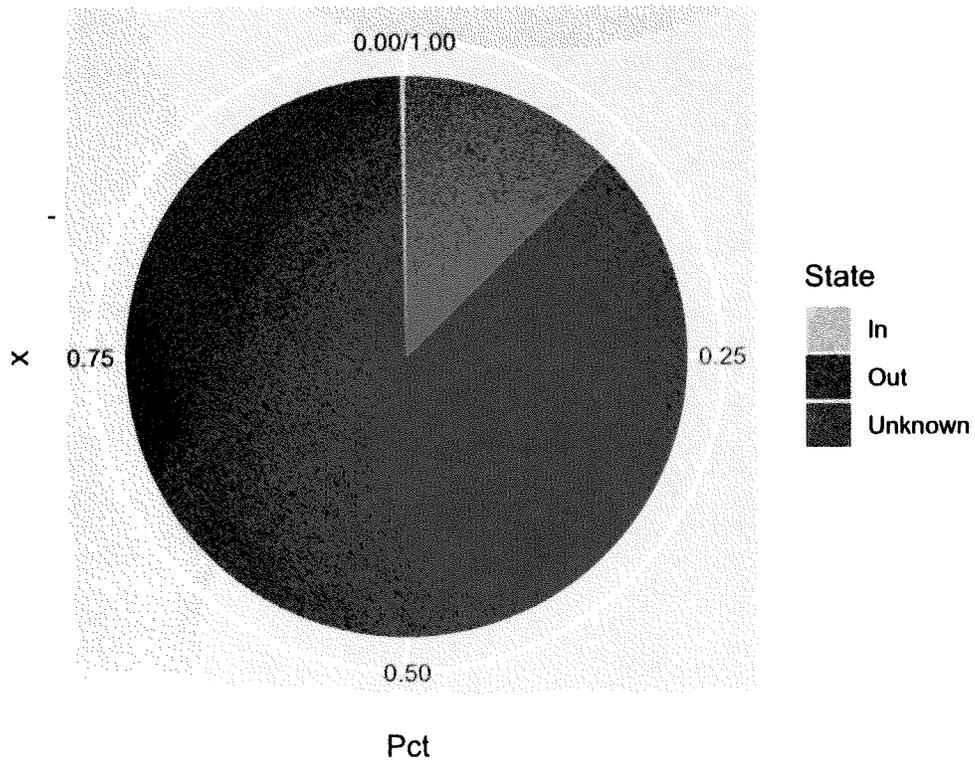


Table 8: Contribution Totals per State, 2010-2022

Rank	State	Contrib Total
1	DC	\$355,863,470
2	CA	\$318,798,954
3	NA	\$288,726,648
4	NV	\$235,300,719
5	NY	\$232,291,112
6	IL	\$177,609,710
7	VA	\$96,455,347
8	FL	\$94,187,692
9	TX	\$74,213,326
10	MA	\$61,917,900
11	WY	\$51,984,776
12	PA	\$39,909,359
13	WA	\$35,943,642
14	CO	\$22,830,503
15	AR	\$22,725,000
16	IN	\$21,861,201
17	GA	\$17,717,165
18	CT	\$16,976,197
19	TN	\$15,296,808
20	NJ	\$15,252,324
21	MD	\$15,156,965
22	OH	\$14,882,068
23	MI	\$12,363,036
24	NC	\$8,934,533
25	OK	\$8,812,660
26	ME	\$7,116,000
27	NE	\$4,157,500
28	KS	\$4,130,600
29	WI	\$3,592,519
30	AL	\$3,181,900
31	MO	\$2,806,050
32	ID	\$2,796,997
33	AZ	\$2,223,499
34	NM	\$2,083,000
35	KY	\$1,804,598
36	LA	\$1,637,000
37	NULL	\$1,585,000
38	UT	\$1,460,000
39	MN	\$1,435,214
40	DE	\$1,328,800
41	NH	\$1,170,000
42	SC	\$1,070,600
43	OR	\$1,045,100
44	MS	\$695,000
45	VT	\$490,000
46	HI	\$474,000
47	IA	\$430,000
48	SD	\$287,500
49	RI	\$267,943
50	WV	\$259,500
51	MT	\$171,000
52	ND	\$145,000
53	AK	\$143,758

5 Time Series Analysis of Contributions per State

Time Series for ME

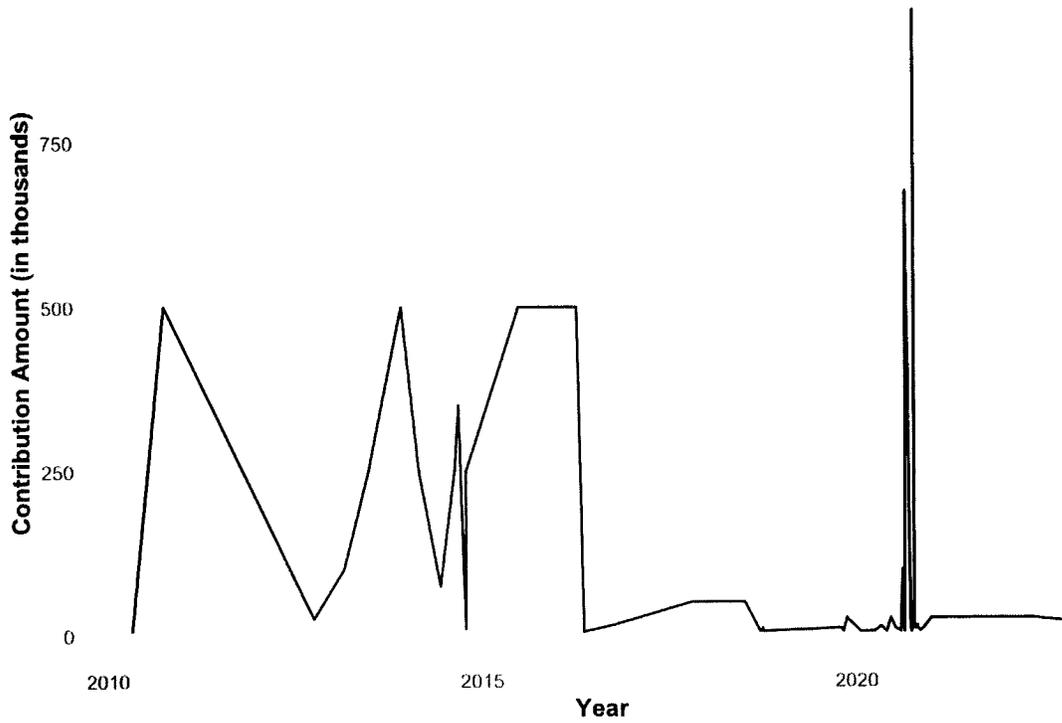


Figure 3: Time series of Maine IN STATE Contributions (> 5k)

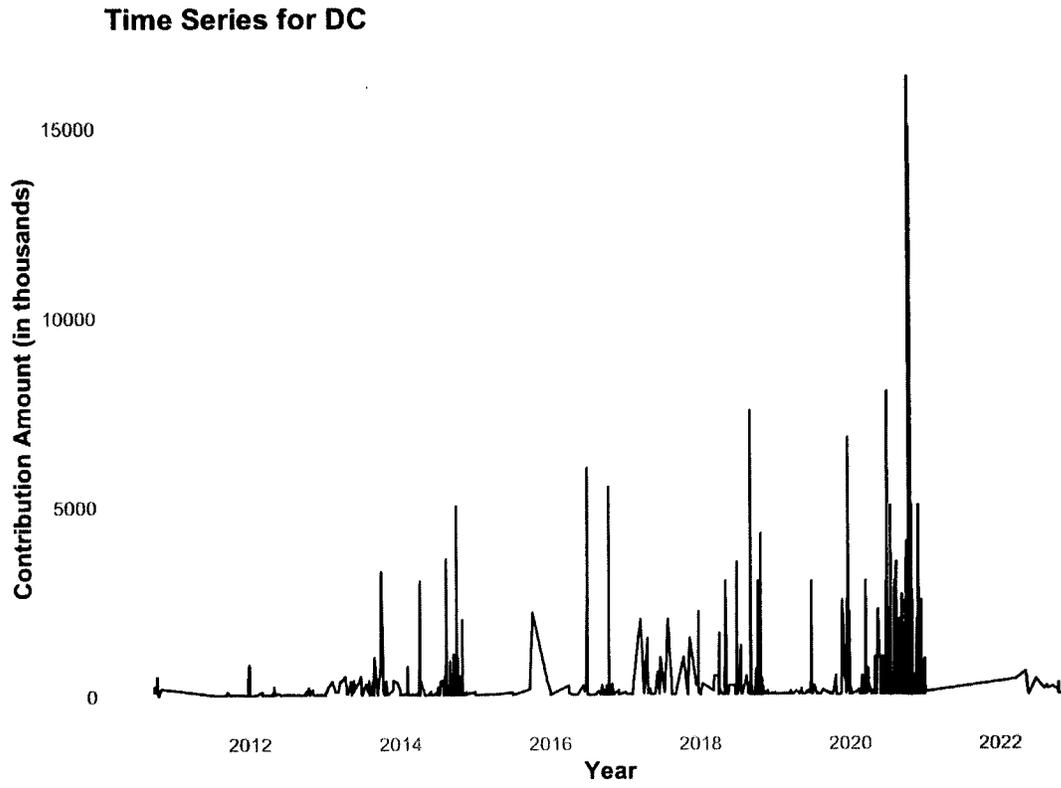


Figure 4: Time Series of OUT-OF-STATE Contributions (> 5k) from DC

Note: The large amount of contributions coming from DC can be explained by the fact that a lot of super PAC groups are headquartered in Washington, DC.

6 Contributions to Super PACs Organized by Partisanship

Note: The following categorizations were made by a team of researchers at OpenSecrets, the nation's premier research and government transparency group tracking money in politics and its effect on elections and policy.

Note: I do not have a codebook on this dataset, but I infer that viewpt = X means that OpenSecrets was unable to place the Super PAC into strictly binary partisan categories.

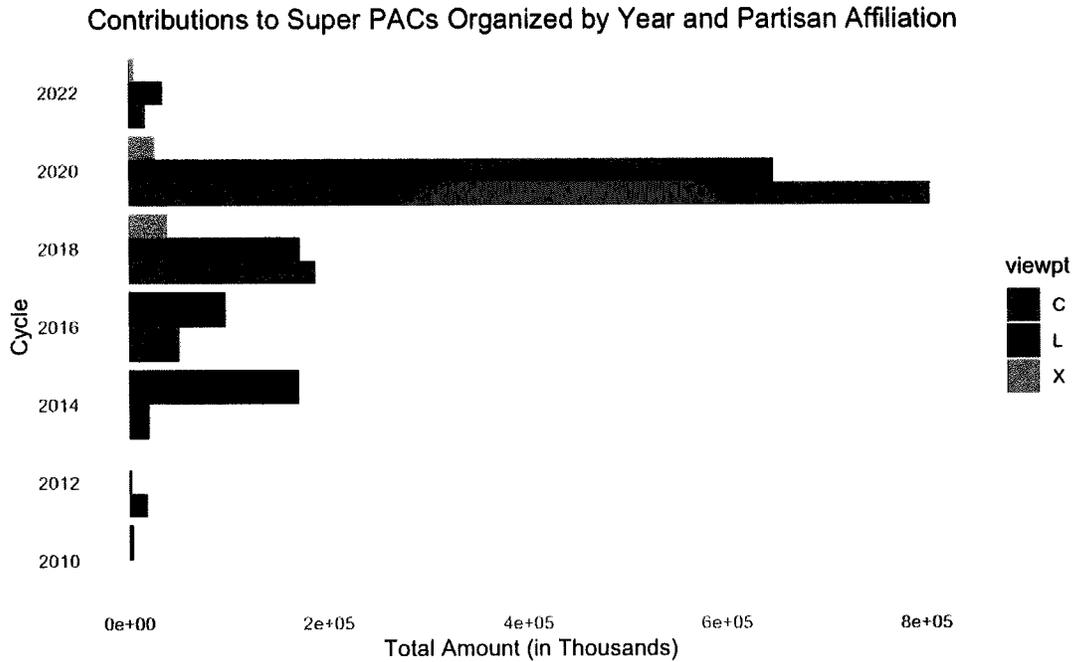


Figure 5: Enter Caption

Table 9: Contributions Organized by Partisanship

Cycle	Pct Consv	Pct Libl	Pct Other	Election Total
2010	0.10	0.90	NA	\$4,919,000
2012	0.87	0.10	0.02	\$21,162,880
2014	0.11	0.89	NA	\$192,267,915
2016	0.35	0.65	NA	\$148,501,150
2018	0.47	0.43	0.01	\$399,825,729
2020	0.54	0.44	0.02	\$1,478,892,397
2022	0.30	0.60	0.11	\$58,565,122
Grand Total				\$2,304,133,193

Supplementary Materials

(1) Information about Super PACs

(1.1) Routes Contributions take to get to Super PACs

Individual → 501(c)(4) → Super PAC
 Individual → Super PAC
 Corporate Treasury → 501(c)(4) → Super PAC
 Union Treasury → 501(c)(4) → Super PAC
 Corporate Treasury → Super PAC
 Union Treasury → Super PAC
 Super PAC → Super PAC
 Ordinary PAC → Super PAC
 Super PAC ⇌ Campaign Committee

(1.2) Differences between Super PACs and Ordinary PACs (at the federal level)

Super PACs	Ordinary PACs
<p>Super PACs cannot give directly to campaign committees. Coordination is legally prohibited.</p> <p>Super PACs have <i>no limits</i> on how much they can receive from a contributor.</p> <p>Super PACs can receive contributions from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individuals - Corporate Treasuries - Union Treasuries - 501(c)(4)s - Other Super PACs - Ordinary PACs 	<p>Ordinary PACs can give directly to campaign committees. Coordination is legally permissible.</p> <p>Ordinary PACs are <i>limited</i> in how much they can receive from a contributor.</p> <p>PACs can receive contributions from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individuals <p>PACs cannot receive contributions from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate Treasuries - Union Treasuries

(1.3) *Contributions vs Expenditures*

Contribution → Super PAC → Independent Expenditures
Contribution → PAC → Expenditures

Λ Note on Contributions vs Expenditures:

- *Independent Expenditures*, at the federal level, refers to uncoordinated election spending by super PACs.
- *Contributions*, in this analysis, refers to the contributions made by individuals, organizations, corporations, or unions to super PACs. Our argument in favor of LD2232 concerns contributions, not independent expenditures.
- See 1.2 (above) for an idea of what kinds of paths exist to get contributions to super PACs.

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Facts about the dataset

- This data was pulled from OpenSecrets' sister website: FollowtheMoney.
- This data looks at all contributions greater than or equal to \$5,000 – with the exception of the out-of-state section of this report, which will also look at all contributions less than or equal to \$5,000.
- This data looks at contributions Maine state elections from 2010-2022.

1 Summary Statistics of *State* Dataset

Table 1: Number of Contributions > \$5,000 per Cycle

Cycle	Contributions
2010	125
2011	70
2012	188
2014	361
2016	504
2017	37
2018	255
2020	181
2022	336

Table 2: Summary Statistics of Contributions > \$5,000 (2010:2022)

Statistic	Value
Min.	\$5,011
1st Qu.	\$10,000
Median	\$20,000
Mean	\$59,111
3rd Qu.	\$50,000
Max.	\$1,700,000

Time Series: Contributions to Maine Elections

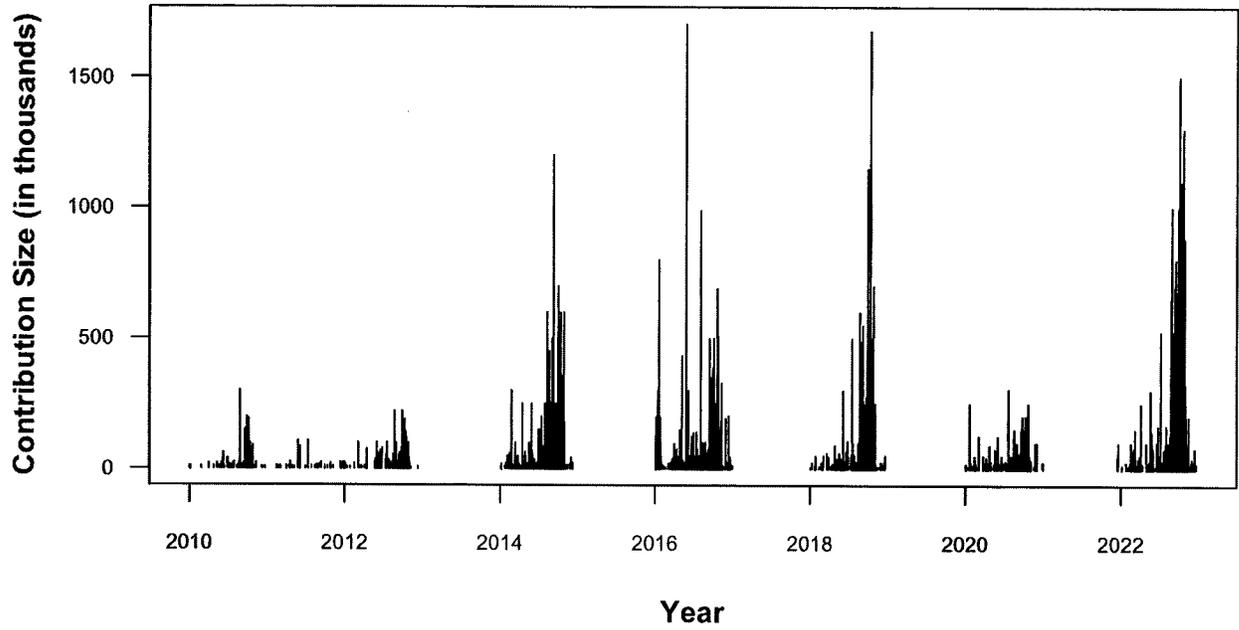


Figure 1: Time Series of IN & OUT-OF-STATE Contributions to Independent Expenditure PACs (2010-2022)

2 Total Contributions by Party and ME Election Year

Table 3: Total of *Expressly* Partisan Contributions per ME Election

Election	Total Democrat/Lib	Total Republican/Cons
2010	\$1,899,594.9	\$1,215,793.8
2011	\$382,961.8	\$571,428.3
2012	\$3,295,910.7	\$2,387,474.6
2014	\$8,594,919.8	\$7,366,530.9
2016	\$4,965,765.7	\$1,598,969.1
2018	\$6,729,388.6	\$3,733,076.2
2020	\$3,838,206.0	\$1,424,869.3
2022	\$6,581,644.8	\$8,458,433.2
Grand Total	\$36,388,392.3	\$26,756,575.4

Total Contributions by Party per Election Year

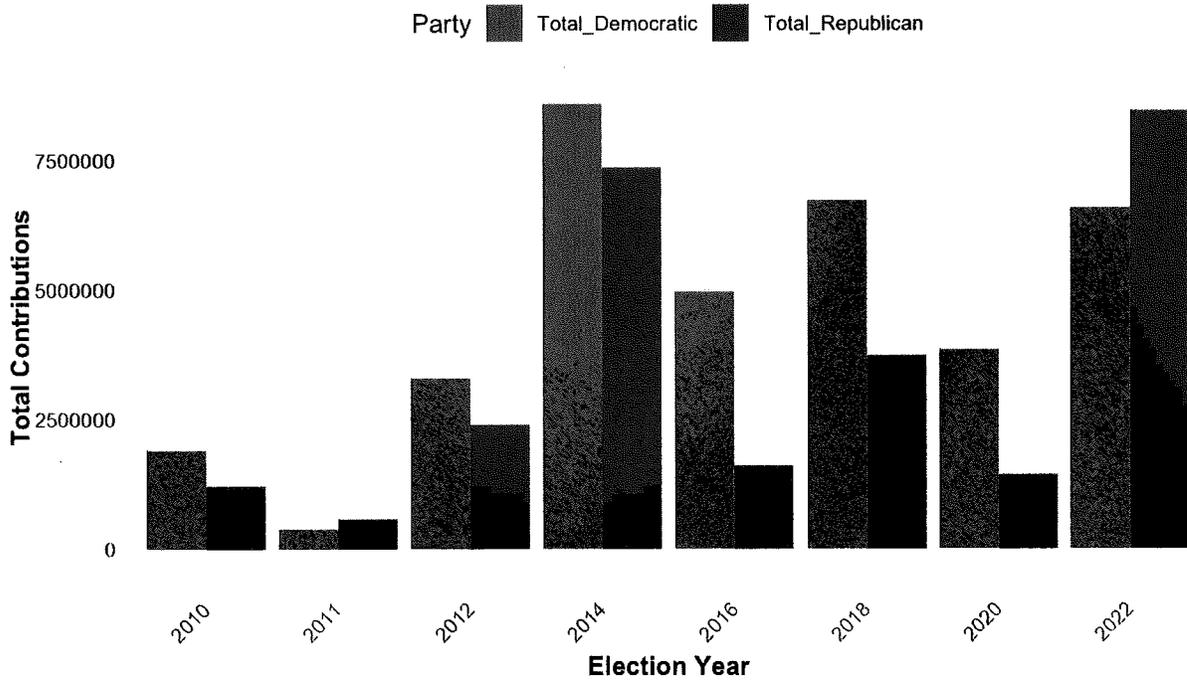


Figure 2: Total Contributions by Party and ME Election Year

3 Top 25 Largest Contributors to Independent Expenditure Groups (2010:2022)

Table 4: Largest Contributors to Independent Expenditure Groups, (2010:2022)

Rank	CFS Entity	Total Contributions
1	DEMOCRATIC GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION	\$16,750,095
2	REPUBLICAN GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION	\$15,373,742
3	SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN CMTE OF MAINE	\$8,582,601
4	NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION	\$5,340,483
5	HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN CMTE OF MAINE	\$4,590,813
6	EVERYTOWN FOR GUN SAFETY	\$4,372,908
7	SCOTT, LISA	\$4,058,965
8	DEMOCRATIC LEGISLATIVE CAMPAIGN CMTE	\$3,445,571
9	LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS	\$3,385,000
10	KLINGENSTEIN, THOMAS	\$3,045,000
11	NEXTGEN CLIMATE ACTION	\$2,795,550
12	NEW APPROACH PAC	\$2,407,372
13	MAINE SENATE REPUBLICAN MAJORITY	\$2,156,359
14	REPUBLICAN STATE LEADERSHIP CMTE	\$2,144,500
15	SUSSMAN, SELWYN DONALD (S D)	\$2,076,188
16	NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION / NRA	\$2,031,551
17	MAINE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION	\$1,612,105
18	UNITEMIZED DONATIONS	\$1,143,388
19	MAINE PEOPLES ALLIANCE	\$1,113,354
20	EMILYS LIST	\$1,093,000
21	PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION OF AMERICA	\$1,031,408
22	CITIZENS WHO SUPPORT MAINES PUBLIC SCHOOLS	\$886,900
23	SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION / SEIU	\$880,000
24	BLANK	\$850,000
25	MAINE REPUBLICAN PARTY	\$789,532

4 In vs Out-of-State Contributions: Maine State Elections

Table 5: In vs Out-of-State Contribution Totals for Contributions OVER \$5,000 (2010-2022)

State	Total	Pct
Out	\$82,386,338	67.7%
In	\$38,142,719	31.3%
Unknown	\$1,062,009	0.08%
Grand Total	\$121,591,066	100.0%

Out-of-State Contributions (Over \$5000)

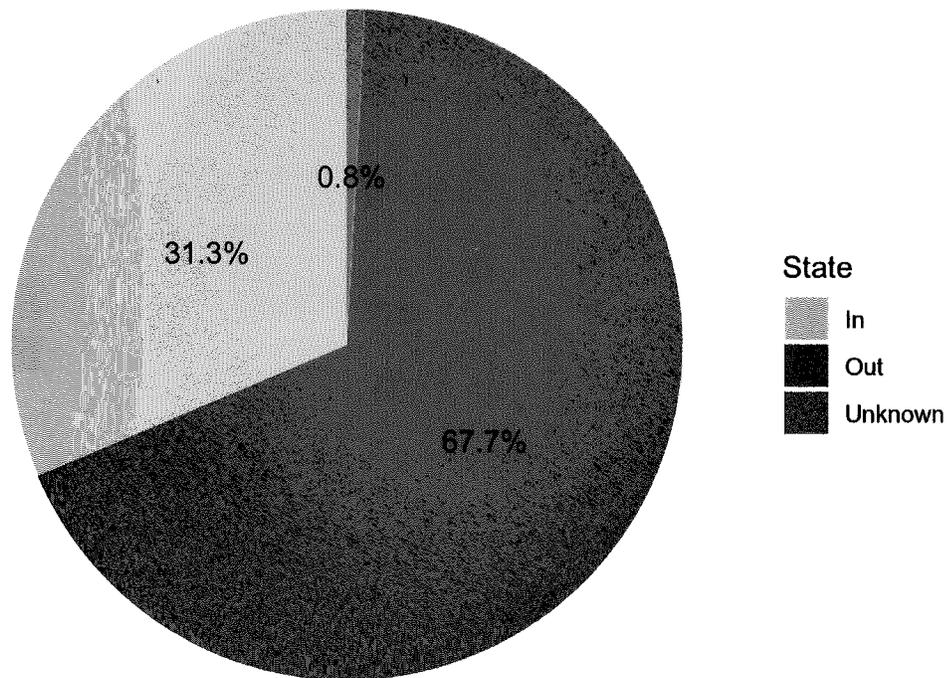
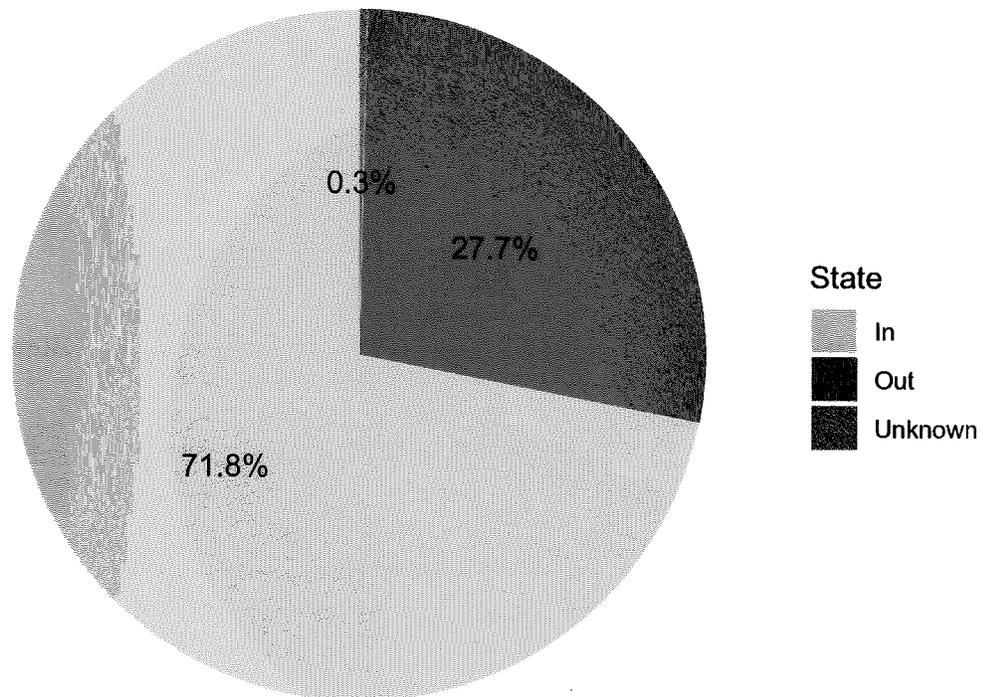


Table 6: In vs Out-of-State Contribution Totals for Contributions UNDER \$5,000 (2010-2022)

State	Total	Pct
Out	\$4,057,295.00	27.7%
In	\$10,517,740.00	71.8%
Unknown	\$54,196.13	0.3%
Grand Total	\$14,629,231.13	100.0%

Out-of-State Contributions (Under \$5000)



Based on an analysis in R, we account for more observations by measuring state using an indicator variable from the dataset called CFS_InState instead of a variable called SAT_State.

STATE REPORT

Table 7: Number of Out-of-State Contributions > \$5,000, 2010-2022

State	Count
DC	467
ME	1154
NY	84
FL	43
<i>NULL</i>	49
PA	38
MD	26
CA	28
VA	34
CT	7
GA	7
IL	9
MA	12
NC	12
OH	12
NH	16
CO	18
MN	2
TN	2
VT	2
WA	4
KS	4
KY	4
MO	4
TX	11
AZ	2
WI	1
RI	1
NJ	1
OK	1
AK	1
AR	1

STATE REPORT

Table 8: Contribution Totals by State (2010-2022)

Rank	Contrib_State	Total
1	DC	\$57,479,818.71
2	ME	\$36,668,032.49
3	NY	\$9,690,322.18
4	FL	\$4,670,275.64
5	VA	\$3,285,813.78
6	PA	\$2,115,032.54
7	<i>NULL</i>	\$2,051,033.25
8	CO	\$1,089,000.00
9	MD	\$724,235.44
10	NC	\$698,500.00
11	TX	\$545,000.00
12	CA	\$484,075.57
13	MA	\$408,000.00
14	NH	\$315,000.00
15	IL	\$276,006.28
16	WA	\$233,000.00
17	GA	\$214,999.00
18	AZ	\$125,000.00
19	CT	\$104,000.00
20	OH	\$84,500.00
21	KS	\$74,500.00
22	MN	\$46,920.55
23	MO	\$41,000.00
24	KY	\$40,000.00
25	VT	\$37,500.00
26	WI	\$25,500.00
27	TN	\$15,500.00
28	OK	\$15,300.00
29	AK	\$10,000.00
30	AR	\$10,000.00
31	RI	\$6,700.00
32	NJ	\$6,500.00

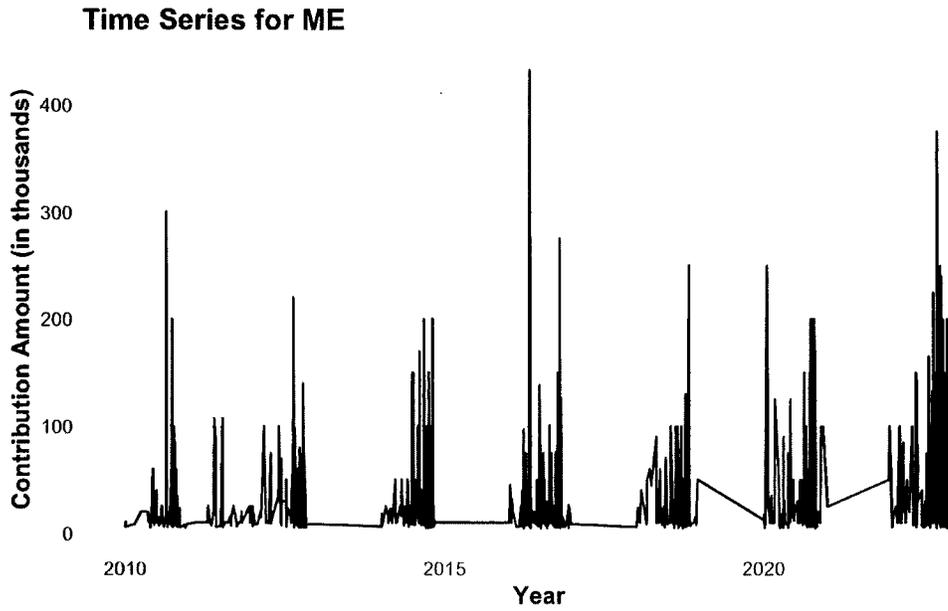


Figure 3: Time Series Plot of IN STATE Contributions (> 5k)

Note: The large amount of contributions coming from DC can be explained by the fact that a lot of super PAC groups are headquartered in Washington, DC.

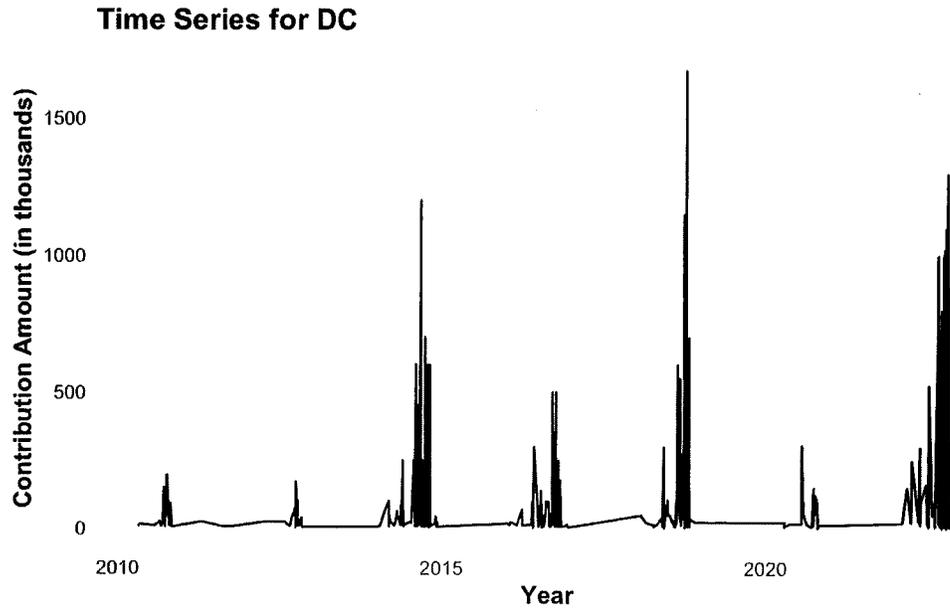


Figure 4: Time Series Plot of DC Contributions (> 5k) to ME Elections

5 Contributions by Industry

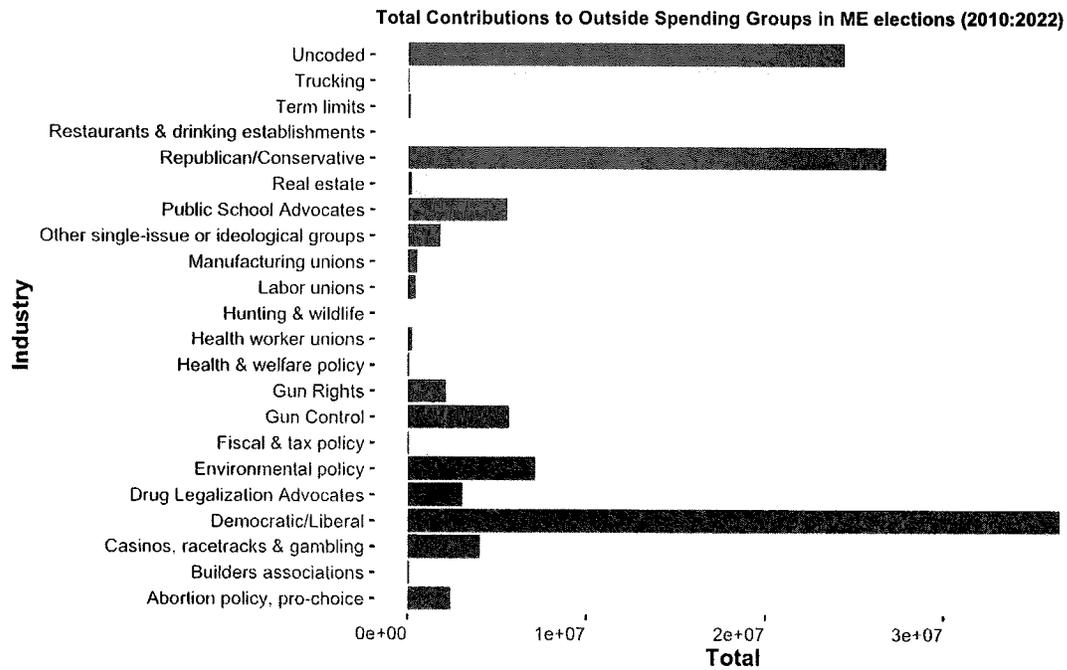


Figure 5: Total Contributions to Independent Expenditure PACs per Industry in ME elections (2010:2022)

Analyses of contributions by industry are not available for election cycles before 2016.

Table 9: Ranked Industry Contributions in 2016 ME Election Cycle

Rank	Business	Total Industry
1	Gun Control	\$5,693,750.20
2	Democratic Party committees	\$3,708,329.04
3	Drug Legalization Advocates	\$3,104,632.28
4	Public School Advocates	\$2,977,302.08
5	Uncoded	\$2,178,637.03
6	Gun Rights	\$2,071,015.93
7	Other single-issue or ideological groups	\$1,714,474.99
8	Republican Party committees	\$1,538,969.15
9	Democratic/Liberal	\$1,257,436.66
10	Abortion policy, pro-choice	\$186,054.18
11	Real estate	\$82,903.98
12	Environmental policy	\$66,000.00
13	Republican/Conservative	\$60,000.00
14	Trucking	\$25,560.00
15	Hunting & wildlife	\$10,000.00
16	Restaurants & drinking establishments	\$7,500.00
Grand Total		\$24,447,615.92

Table 10: Ranked Industry Contributions in 2018 ME Election Cycle

Rank	Business	Total Industry
1	Uncoded	\$5,993,414.20
2	Democratic Party committees	\$4,610,648.40
3	Republican Party committees	\$3,733,076.20
4	Democratic/Liberal	\$2,118,740.20
5	Environmental policy	\$1,540,000.00
6	Abortion policy, pro-choice	\$258,000.00
7	Real estate	\$57,450.00
8	Gun Rights	\$30,007.90
Grand Total		\$17,341,337.90

Table 11: Ranked Industry Contributions in 2020 ME Election Cycle

Rank	Business	Total Industry
1	Democratic Party committees	\$3,313,127.50
2	Republican Party committees	\$1,424,869.30
3	Public School Advocates	\$671,000.00
4	Democratic/Liberal	\$525,078.60
5	Uncoded	\$464,375.10
6	Abortion policy, pro-choice	\$355,295.00
7	Health & welfare policy	\$103,704.00
8	Environmental policy	\$45,000.00
Grand Total		\$6,902,449.50

Table 12: Ranked Industry Contributions in 2022 ME Election Cycle

Rank	Business	Total Industry
1	Uncoded	\$14,825,767.50
2	Republican Party committees	\$8,458,433.20
3	Democratic Party committees	\$5,680,844.80
4	Environmental policy	\$1,065,514.90
5	Democratic/Liberal	\$900,799.90
6	Abortion policy, pro-choice	\$895,500.00
7	Public School Advocates	\$729,000.00
8	Term limits	\$156,160.40
9	Gun Rights	\$35,887.50
Grand Total		\$32,647,798.20