By WILL GULDIN

OPENSECRETS.ORG

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Sources: FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION,

DEMOCRACY FOR A PRICE

A hard-to-track type of campaign spending benefitted the state's democratic candidates, bucking a national trend.

utside groups spent a record amount during the 2012 election cycle in attempt to sway voters. These groups spent more than \$1

During the last presidential election, that number was closer to \$300 million. The Supreme Court's 2010 decision in Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission paved the way toward this higher spending by allowing corporations and unions to make political expenditures, so long as that spending is done independently of any candidate.

Often this spending is used for ads that specifically pull for or oppose a candidate. These are called "indepedent expenditures" and made up the vast majority of that \$1 billion spent by outside groups throughout the eleciton

Although Missouri is no longer the battleground state it once was, dozens of groups made independent expenditures here during the election. In an exception to the national rule, though, most of this spending supported democrats or opposed republicans, particularly incumbent U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill. She won reelection against challenger Todd Akin.

billion to influence the election.

On the left, groups and the amount of their independent expenditures are shown.

Independent expenditures in Missouri during the 2012 election, grouped by organization

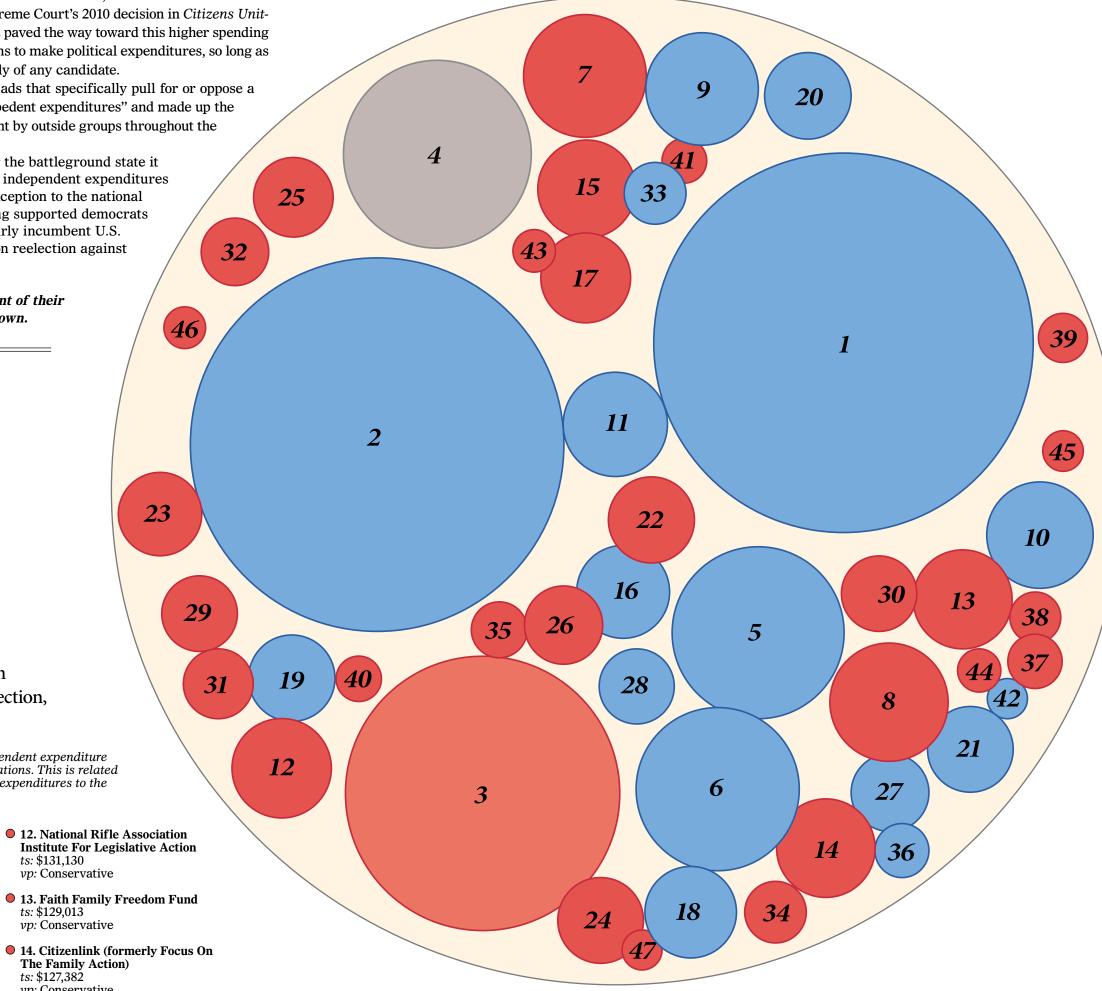
Note: For several reasons, these independent expenditure totals should be considered approximations. This is related to the way groups have to report their expenditures to the Federal Election Commission

- 1. Majority Pac Total spent: \$3,664,228 Viewpoint: Liberal
- **2. Democratic Senatorial** Campaign Committee Total spent: \$3,493,836 Viewpoint: Liberal
- 3. Now Or Never Pac Total spent: \$1,698,890 Viewpoint: Mostly conservative (About a quarter of its spending supported democrats or opposed conservatives)
- **4. US Chamber Of Commerce** ts: \$740,194 vp: Split spending between political leanings
- 5. Women Vote! ts: \$555,267 vp: Liberal
- 6. SEIU COPE (Service Employees **International Union Committee** On Political Education) *vp*: Liberal
- 7. Freedom's Defense Fund ts: 242423 *vp*: Conservative
- **8.** National Rifle Association Of **America Political Victory Fund** ts: \$214,364 *vp:* Conservative
- 9. Patriot Majority USA ts: \$201,715

vp: Liberal

- **○** 10. International Association Of **Firefighters Interested In Registration And Education PAC**
- 11. Planned Parenthood Action Fund
- Liberal
- ts: \$159,668 *vp*: Liberal

\$13.5 MILLION TOTAL



- *vp*: Conservative
- **13. Faith Family Freedom Fund** ts: \$129,013 vp: Conservative
- 14. Citizenlink (formerly Focus On The Family Action) ts: \$127,382 vp: Conservative
- 15. Senate Conservatives Fund vp: Conservative
- **○** 16. Working America ts: \$111,212 vp: Liberal
- 17. Reinventing A New Direction - RANDPAC ts: \$100,000
- vp: Conservative 18. The American Congress Of **Ob-gyns Pac** ts: \$99.999
- vp: Liberal 19. Planned Parenthood Votes ts: \$96,857
- vp: Liberal **20.** American Bridge 21st Century ts: \$93,295
- vp: Liberal **21.** The Voices Of The American **Federation Of Government**
- **Employees** ts: \$83,333 vp: Liberal
- 22. Our Country Deserves Better Pac - Teapartyexpress.Org ts: \$81,091 vp: Conservative
- 23. Red White And Blue Fund ts: \$77,023 vp: Conservative

- 24. Restoring America
- ts: \$75,000
- vp: Conservative **25.** Independent Women's Voice ts: \$67,242
- *vp*: Conservative 26. American Crossroads ts: \$64.097
- vp: Conservative **27. House Majority Pac** ts: \$61,196
- vp: Liberal **28. Service Employees International Union** PEA — Federal

ts: \$53,963

- vv: Liberal 29. Campaign For Working **Families** ts: \$51,494
- vp: Conservative 30. National Right To Life
- **Political Action Committee** ts: \$48.003 *vp:* Conservative
- 31. Winning Our Future ts: \$38,804 *vp*: Conservative

- **32.** Conservative Majority Fund ts: \$32,461
- vp: Conservative 33. Naral Pro-choice America ts: \$24,952
- vp: Liberal **34.** Missouri Farm Bureau **Federation Statewide Farm PAC**
- ts: \$24,151 vp: Conservative 35. Freedomworks For America ts: \$15,188
- vp: Conservative **○** 36. Campaign For Community Change
- vp: Liberal **37.** National Right To Life **Victory Fund** ts: \$13.944 vp: Conservative

ts: \$15,118

- **38. NFIB The Voice Of Free Enterprise** ts: \$10,453 vp: Conservative
- **39. National Organization** For Marriage ts: \$7,883 *νp*: Conservative

- 40. Fidelis
- ts: \$3,082 *vp*: Conservative
- 42. Communications Workers Of America Working Voices ts: \$2,538 vp: Liberal
- ts: \$2,314 *vp*: Conservative
- The United States ts: \$2,300 *vp*: Conservative
- Strikeforce ts: \$1,718 *vp*: Conservative
- ts: \$1,616 *vp:* Conservative
- ts: \$1.031 *νp*: Conservative

vp: Conservative

41. Endorse Liberty

- 43. Susan B. Anthony List
- 44. Public Advocate Of
- 45. The Conservative
- 46. Tea Party Victory Fund
- **47.** American Future Fund

liberal groups spent heavily with more than 64 percent of all independent expenditures going toward opposing republican

Missouri bucks a national trend

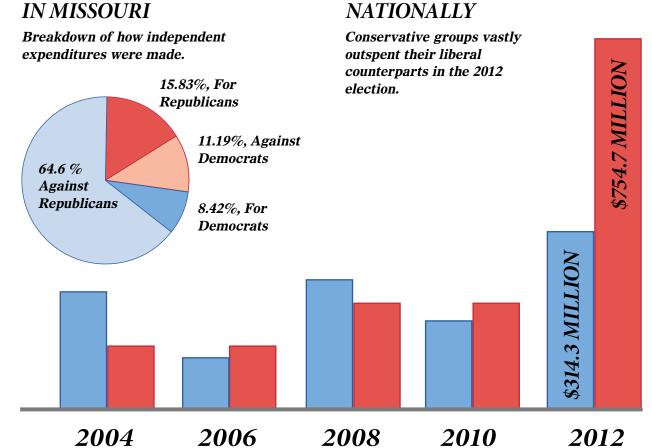
This could be explained by the Missouri Senate race, where Claire McCaskill kept her seat, holding off challenger Todd Akin. After his "legitimate rape" comment, liberal groups felt the seat was suddenly more likely to stay democratic, and the bought ads and made other expenses to

n the whole, conservative groups vastly outspent liberal

groups in the 2012 election, and they outspent them by a small-

er margin did in the 2010 election, too. In Missouri, though,

oppose him.



The rise of independent expenditures

hese vast fundraising amounts are part of an ongoing trend across the country. Over the past several election cycles, the amount of independent expenditures made has steadily risen, and it jumped much higher in the 2012 election.

Presidential elections gather more spending attention than mid-terms, but this was also the first presidential election since the 2010 Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission decision by the Supreme Court. Shortly after this decision, another case led to the creation of "Super PACs," or groups that raise unlimited sums from corporations, individuals, unions, and other groups, according to OpenSecrets.org. Super PACs aren't allowed to contribute directly to a candidate's campaign.

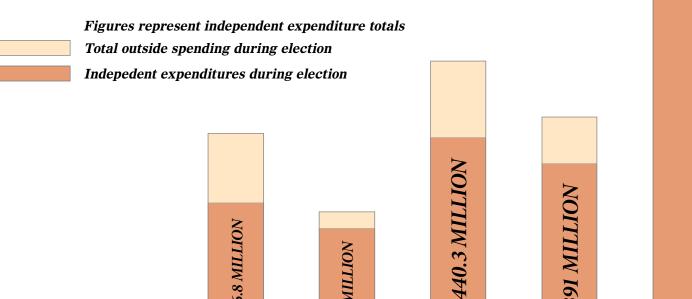
This graphic shows the rise in independent expenditures as a portion of all outside spending, minus what was spent each election cycle by party committess.

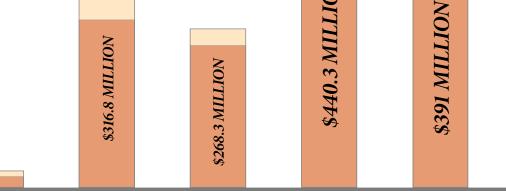
2002

2000

1998

1996





2006 *2004 2010 2012 2008*