

# North Carolina's Campaign Finance Dashboard

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*Raleigh Brigade, Code for America. March 10, 2020. Updated April 2, 2020.*

***The creation of a dashboard to make campaign finance data available, searchable and sortable will change politics in North Carolina.***

A lack of easy access to campaign finance data — that any citizen can search, sort and understand — undermines a transparent democracy. Our ability as voters and citizens to understand the people and corporations who fund the campaigns of our elected officials is key to making sense of policy outcomes and ensuring our elected officials have the public interest in mind when making vital decisions.

This project will put campaign finance for the General Assembly and statewide offices into an easily sortable and searchable dashboard to make sense of those who are funding campaigns of state leaders for use by citizens, journalists, activists, academics and others.

When this project is completed, the dashboard will provide both a comprehensive and — with only key search terms — granular look at a candidate's donors, expenses and outside independent group spending.

Just one example - what it's like on the NC Board of Elections website ([link below](#)) now to search for a candidate and what they might be spending or who their donors are. In this case, I went through the example of searching for NC Governor Roy Cooper by putting in the search term "Roy."

This search allows you to view Campaign Finance documents. The **IMAGE** view is a scanned PDF file that shows the document **as it was submitted to the SBOE**. The **DATA** view is either a report electronically filed by the committee and imported by the SBOE or a report that has been manually entered into a data format by an SBOE staff member. Report data that is imported does not appear on our website in real-time. Our website updates overnight each weeknight. All data imported during a business day will appear on our website the following day.

Committee Name  
 Candidate First Name  
 Inhouse Name  
 Acronym

Roy

Enter any part of either the committee name the inhouse name, last name of the candidate, or the committee acronym.  
(Remember to select the appropriate name type for the search.)

N.C. State Board of Elections

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<https://www.ncsbe.gov/Campaign-Finance>

# *Search of site*

## Search for "Roy"

Click on one of the link(s) below to view the available documents for that committee.  
It may take a few seconds to return all of the documents.

Results Returned: 3

Committee Name	SBoE ID	Status	Candidate Name/Parent Entity Name
THE COOPER COMM (COOPER, ROY)	STA-C0498N-C-001	CLOSED	ROY COOPER
COOPER FOR NC HOUSE (COOPER, ROY)	STA-C0498N-C-003	CLOSED	ROY COOPER III
WILSON CTY JOINT FUNDRAISER	STA-C0046N-C-001	CLOSED	JOINT FUNDRAISER 20% EACH MIKE EASLEY, BEVERLY PERDUE, RICHARD MOORE, ROY COOPER, AB SWINDELL

You'll notice that all of the committees - meaning Political Action Committees, the entities required to collect money and spend for political candidates — are all "closed" meaning these are old PACs.

## *Search of site contd.*

Search “Cooper”

You get Roy Cooper's active PAC by searching for "Cooper." But notice this - you get links that are confusing. Let's click on "All Reports" and then one of the quarterly reports. Go to next slide.

[COOPER FOR NORTH CAROLINA \(COOPER, ROY A III\)](#)

[STA-C0498N-C-002](#)

[ACTIVE \(NON-EXEMPT\) ROY A COOPER 3](#)



Campaign Document Search By Entity

Applications▼

Campaign Finance 2020 First Quarter for:  
COOPER FOR NORTH CAROLINA [STA-C0498N-C-002]

Choose one of the following Report Sections: [Image](#)

Section	Count	Link
All Report Sections Listed Below		
Report Cover		<a href="#">HTML VIEW</a>
Detailed Summary		<a href="#">HTML VIEW</a>
Detailed Receipts	7316	<a href="#">HTML VIEW</a>
Detailed Expenditures	213	<a href="#">HTML VIEW</a>
Loan Proceeds	0	<a href="#">HTML VIEW</a>
Loan Repayments	0	<a href="#">HTML VIEW</a>
Forgiven Loans	0	<a href="#">HTML VIEW</a>
Outstanding Loans	0	<a href="#">HTML VIEW</a>
Debts and Obligations Owed TO the Committee	0	<a href="#">HTML VIEW</a>
Debts and Obligations Owed BY the Committee	0	<a href="#">HTML VIEW</a>
Account Transfers Within the Committee	0	<a href="#">HTML VIEW</a>
Administrative Support	0	<a href="#">HTML VIEW</a>

## *Search of site contd.*

Decent summary page... (partial view)

We get some good summary information in that quarterly report. Take a glance below and go to next slide.

Political Committee Disclosure Report  
[Export data to .CSV](#)

SUMMARY		
	Total This Period	Total This Election
Cash on Hand at Beginning	\$8,281,562.82	\$771,430.34
RECEIPTS	\$0.00	\$0.00
Aggregated Contributions from Individuals	\$39,048.26	\$39,048.26
Contributions from Individuals	\$1,365,748.63	\$11,932,064.81
Political Party Committees	\$233,647.53	\$825,664.62
Other Political Committees (such as PACs)	\$102,400.00	\$278,854.08
Loan Proceeds	\$0.00	\$0.00
Refunds/Reimbursements To the Committee	\$277.56	\$264,260.47
Interest on Bank Accounts	\$32.16	\$909.42
Contributions from Not-For-Profit Organizations	\$0.00	\$0.00
Outside Sources of Income	\$0.00	\$0.00
Legal Expense Fund - Other Sources	\$0.00	\$0.00
Exempt Purchase Price Sales	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Receipts	\$1,741,154.14	\$13,340,801.66
EXPENDITURES	\$0.00	\$0.00

## *Search of site contd.*

Expenditures

Now, drilling down on the spending tab, we get a big list of spending from that quarter. Note able to export this to a CSV.

Political Committee Disclosure Report

[Export data to CSV](#)

EXPENDITURES								
Date	Name Of Payee And Complete Mailing Address	Expenditure Type	Purpose	In-Kind Description	Account Code	Form Of Payment	Amount Of Expenditure	Sum To Date
01/08/2020	ACTBLUE PO BOX 382110 CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138	Operating Expense	CREDIT CARD PROCESSING FEES		10	Draft	\$5,163.94	\$96,562.92
02/05/2020	ACTBLUE PO BOX 382110 CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138	Operating Expense	CREDIT CARD PROCESSING FEES		10	Draft	\$8,297.81	\$96,562.92
01/21/2020	ADOB SYSTEMS, INC. 75 REMITTANCE DR. CHICAGO, IL 60675	Operating Expense	SOFTWARE LICENSE AGREEMENT		2	Draft	\$56.83	\$4,023.14
01/03/2020	ADP 5800 WINDWARD PARKWAY ALPHARETTA, GA 30005	Operating Expense	PAYROLL PROCESSING		2	Draft	\$86.00	\$4,381.57
01/24/2020	ADP 5800 WINDWARD PARKWAY ALPHARETTA, GA 30005	Operating Expense	PAYROLL PROCESSING		2	Draft	\$86.00	\$4,381.57
	ADP		PAYOUT					

## *Search of site contd.*

Eventually, alphabetized list of contributors

Noting the fields that already exist,  
see below.

01/12/2020	ADAM ABBOTT NOT EMPLOYED NOT EMPLOYED 509 FIELD STREET COLLEYVILLE, TX 76034	Individual Contribution	10	Credit Card	\$25.00	\$25.00
01/23/2020	ROBERT M. ABEL 154 RIDGE ROAD OTTO, NC 28763	Individual Contribution	2	Check	\$12.00	\$62.00
01/30/2020	RODGER A. ABEL 20 SHAKER COURT ASHEVILLE, NC 28805	Individual Contribution	2	Check	\$50.00	\$150.00
02/08/2020	JOHN ABERCROMBIE PROGRAMMER EPIC GAMES 100 SHILLINGS CHASE DRIVE CARY, NC 27518	Individual Contribution	10	Credit Card	\$500.00	\$850.00
01/12/2020	ROBERT ABERNATHY NOT EMPLOYED NOT EMPLOYED 115 DAVID BIDDLE TRAIL ASHEVILLE, NC 28787	Individual Contribution	10	Credit Card	\$40.00	\$100.00

Useful info - employment, address (in-state vs. out of state), industry, company vs individual totals, total in cycle

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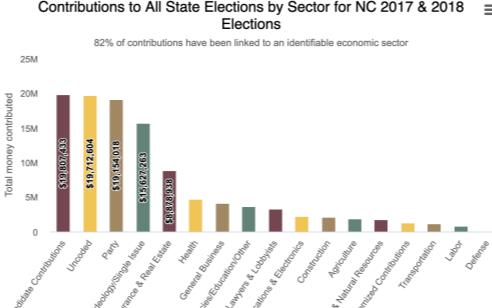
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Trending from VPAC SAME BILLS, DIFFERENT OUTCOMES MAPPING SUPER TUESDAY DONORS FIND BILLS BY TOPIC

Contributions to All State Elections by Sector for NC 2017 & 2018 Elections

82% of contributions have been linked to an identifiable economic sector

Total money contributed



Sector	Total money contributed (M)
Nonprofit Contributions	\$10,931,453
Unclaimed	\$19,721,604
Party	\$19,545,008
Ideology/Single Issue	\$15,271,263
Business & Real Estate	\$10,636,933
Health	\$5,000,000
General Business	\$4,000,000
Lawyers & Lobbyists	\$3,000,000
Industries & Electronics	\$2,000,000
Construction	\$1,000,000
Agriculture	\$1,000,000
Natural Resources	\$1,000,000
Armed Contributions	\$1,000,000
Transportation	\$1,000,000
Labor	\$1,000,000

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These are good examples of state-level websites that make campaign finance data accessible. More: go to [vpac.org](#); [followthemoney.org](#); [illinoisunshine.org](#). What makes these sites great is visualizations that make the data clear; search bars that allow easy access to candidate or donor data; useful categorizations for data by industry. Follow the Money has North Carolina data but there is a significant lag time.

Want to know more? Email Jeremy Borden at  
[borden.jeremy@gmail.com](mailto:borden.jeremy@gmail.com) OR join the Google group at  
<https://tinyurl.com/utl3d2s> and introduce yourself!



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Pursue Attorneys General**



Emails detail interactions between the office of Attorney General Pam Bondi of Florida and a law firm trying to sway her. Alex Wong/Getty Images

By Eric Lipton

Oct. 28, 2014



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When the executives who distribute 5-Hour Energy, the popular caffeinated drinks, learned that attorneys general in more than states were investigating allegations of deceptive advertising serious financial threat to the company — they moved quickly shut the investigations down, one state at a time.

But success did not come in court or at a negotiating table.

Instead, it came at the opulent Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel.

Campaign finance reporting is really important at the state level! Just a couple examples but understanding who finances the General Assembly is key to understanding what their priorities are and the beginning of inquiry into whether deals, contracts and decisions were made in our best interest.

CONFEDERATE GROUP IN SILENT SAM DEAL ACCUSED OF VIOLATING TAX AND CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS



BY CHARLIE MCGEE

For years, the pro-Confederate group that the UNC System dealt \$2.6 million has been violating federal tax laws, operating a political action committee in violation of its tax-exempt status and facilitating political donations through illegal means, according to numerous individual first-hand accounts, a slew of internal communications provided to The Daily Tar Heel and multiple expert legal opinions.

The North Carolina Division Sons of Confederate Veterans Inc. struck a pair of backdoor deals last November with UNC System Board of Governors members. A predetermined lawsuit and settlement gave the group Silent Sam and \$2.5 million in UNC System money for the Confederate monument's "preservation and benefit." A week previous, the system paid \$74,999 to the SCV for an agreement to limit its display of Confederate symbolism on UNC System property.