

The background features a stylized American flag motif. A dark blue border with white stars runs along the top and bottom edges. A diagonal dark blue line divides the space, with red and white horizontal stripes on the right side.

To Buy a President:

Unpacking the Influence of Money in Politics

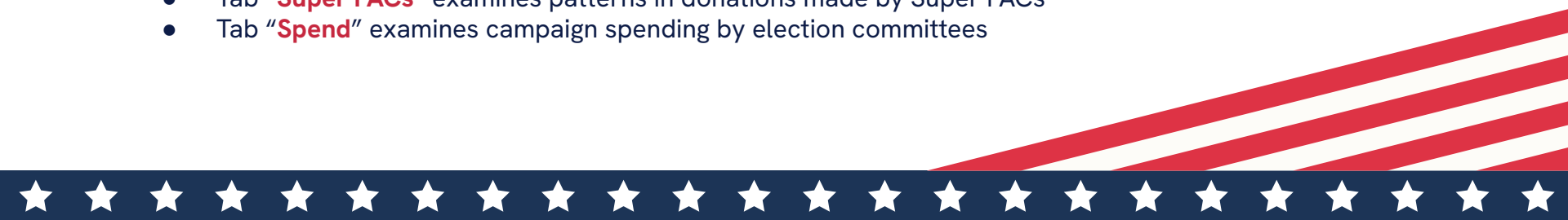
Darya Likhareva, Quyen Ha, Daniel Kim, and
Zachary Fenton



Visualizing U.S. Election Donation Patterns

Goal	Explore how campaign donations from individual donors, organizations, PACs, Super PACs, and campaign spending correlate with election outcomes.
Audience	Anyone interested in examining donation patterns in U.S. elections
Data Sources	Utilizes data from the Federal Election Commission and Open Secrets, focusing on recent elections.

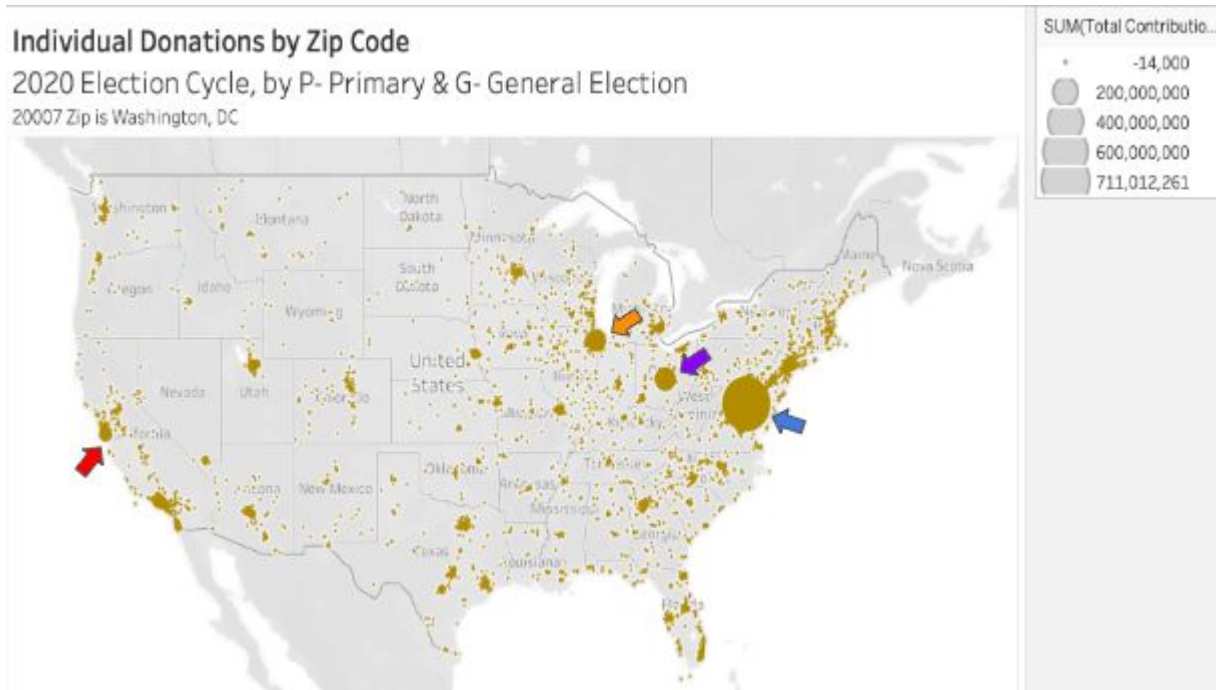
Our website is organized by individual tabs:

- Tab “**Individual**” examines patterns in donations made by individuals donors
 - Tab “**PACs**” examines patterns in donations made by PACs
 - Tab “**Super PACs**” examines patterns in donations made by Super PACs
 - Tab “**Spend**” examines campaign spending by election committees
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Changes Implemented Post User Testing: Individual Donations

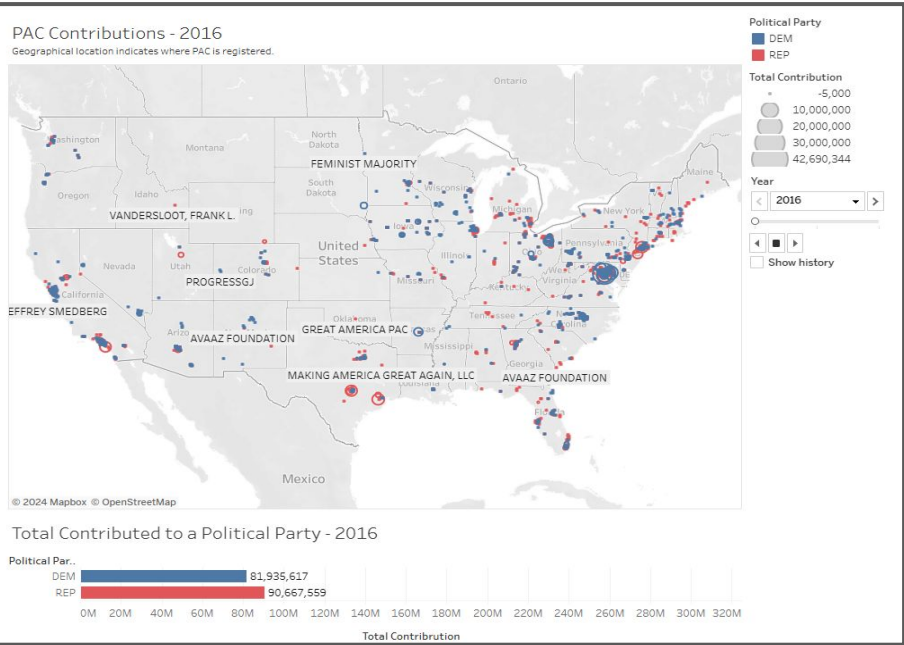
User Feedback	Implemented Change
More detail on what #s stand for, dollars?	Added more detail on tooltip categories
Remove the negative donations because they are confusing	Negative donations removed from the dataset
Adjust the color and 'highlight' of major ZIP codes	Top 5 ZIP donation codes pointed out through annotated points & changed the view from circles to heatmap to better display differences
Add more years of data for comparison	Added 2016 & 2018 data for comparison

Changes Implemented Post User Testing: Individual Donations

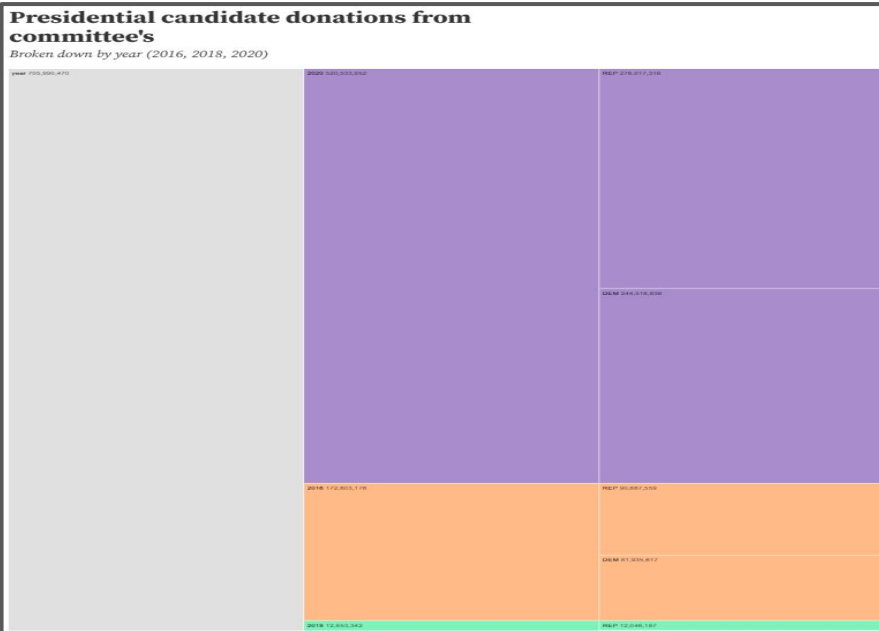


Changes Implemented Post User Testing: PACs

User Feedback	Implemented Change
Make available all years for direct comparison, reducing mental load.	Changed to faceted side-by-side view of GeoViz data.
Reduce confusion on what 'total_contribution' feature is referring to.	Changed feature labels to more human readable format.
Address Treemap color scheme.	Chose a color scheme (interpolateCividis) that is designed to be perceptually uniform, even for person with color vision deficiency.
Add information to help understand what a PAC is a what laws they should follow.	Included descriptive text to ensure clarity and help with improving insights.



Old PAC Treemap



Old PAC GeoVisualization

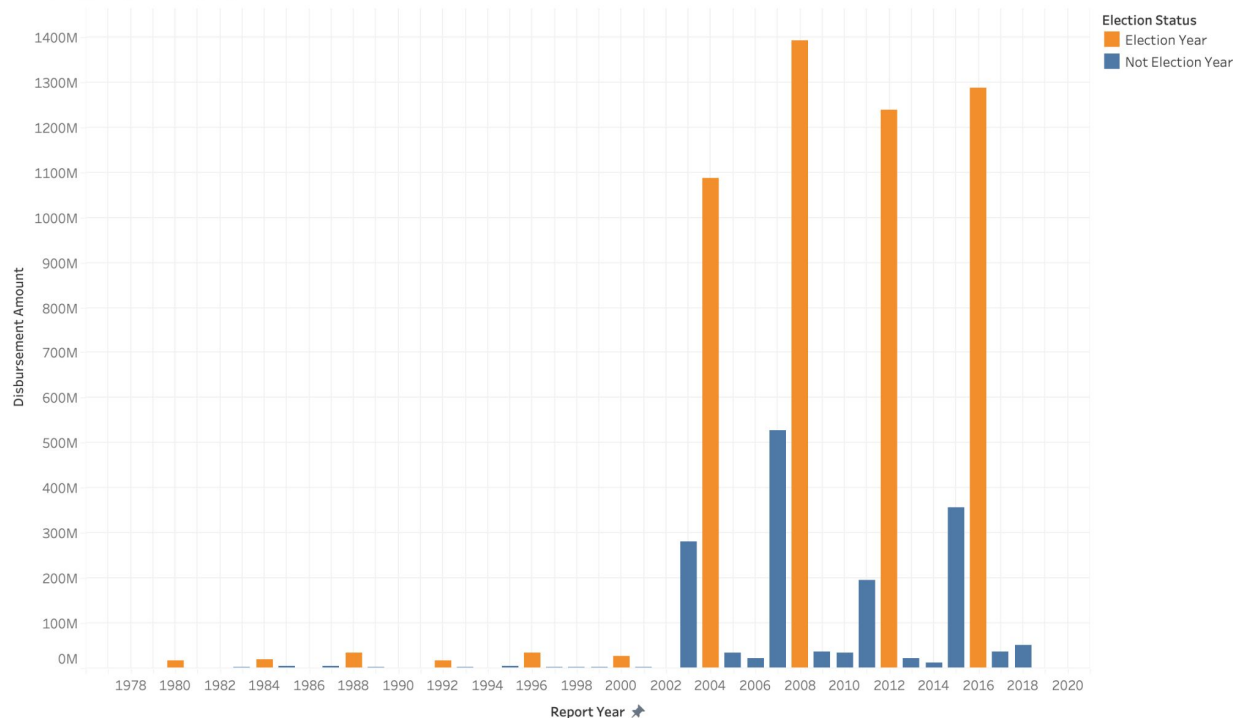


Changes Implemented Post User Testing: Super PACs

User Feedback	Implemented Change
Lack of understanding about Super PACs, margin of victory, and other concepts	Add text-based description to all visualizations to provide additional background information
Confusion about whether donations to contested races occurred because the races were highly contested or there were simply more races in these buckets	Add number of races to each margin of victory bucket
Fix typos and add better labeling for X and Y axes	Address typos and provide clearer labels to all visualizations
Difficulty in identifying relevant toggles and dropdowns due to these functionalities being too far to the right of the visualization	Resize visualization and move all filters to the left and close to each visualization

Spend Prototype

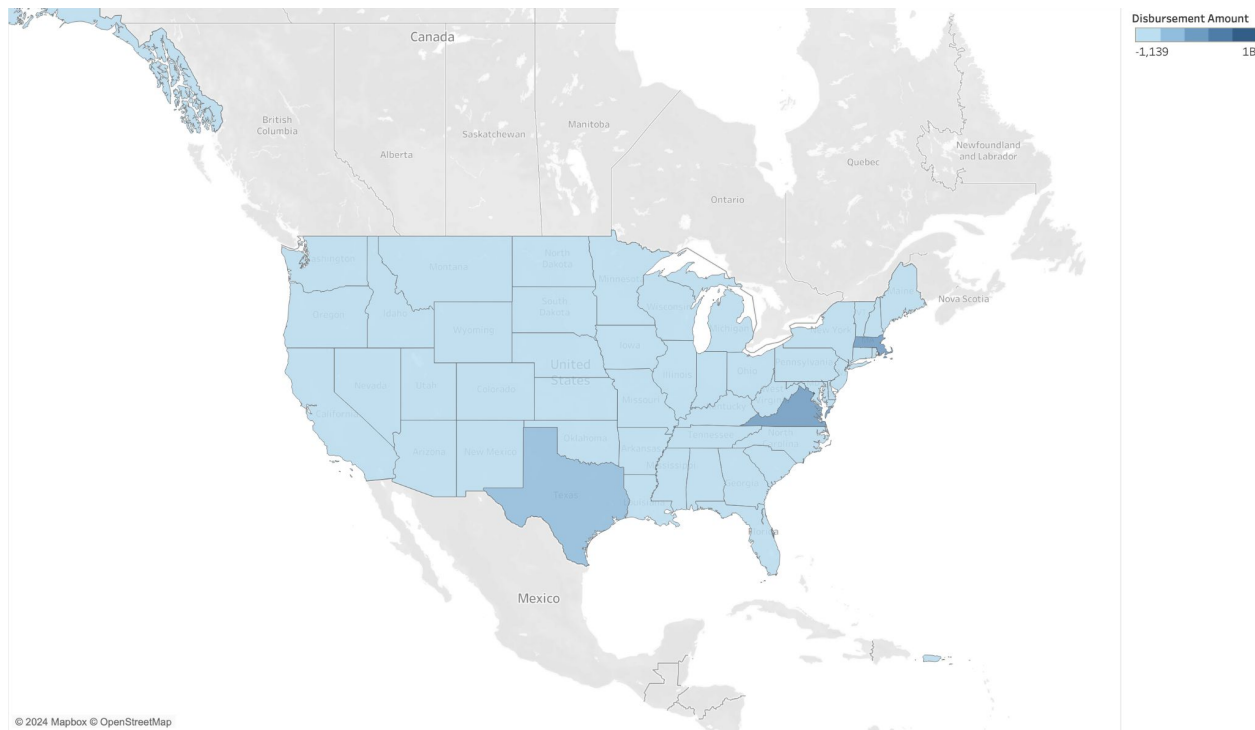
Campaign Spending By Year



The plot of sum of Disbursement Amount for Report Year. Color shows details about Election Status.

Historical spending data shows a large increase in spending for election seasons and post-2000 era elections.

Spend Prototype cont.



Map based on Longitude (generated) and Latitude (generated). Color shows sum of Disbursement Amount. Details are shown for Recipient State.

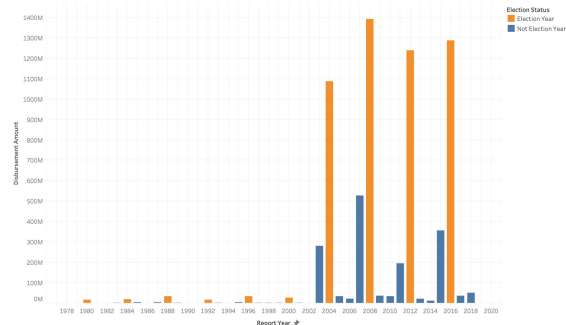
Campaign spending show an initial concentration in certain states for 1980 - 2018.

Changes Implemented Post User Testing: Spend

User Feedback	Implemented Change
Formatting - ie. years on bar chart did not line up, state names, etc.	Fixed labeling errors, added year faceting, Standardized color formatting, and added state names to choropleths.
Election victory and party labeling to connect spend with outcomes	Added election victory and party labels to visualizations
Change choropleths with more granular gradations for a deeper insight on location-based data	Re-formatted choropleth and legend to show more distinct categories
Different types of visualizations for more unique insights on spending	Added spender vs spendee heat map, added crossfilters for more valuable insights on spending details and locations

Changes Implemented Post User Testing: Spend

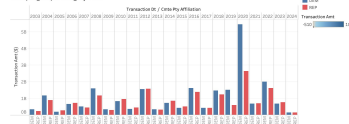
Campaign Spending By Year



The plot of sum of Disbursement Amount for Report Year. Color shows details about Election Status.



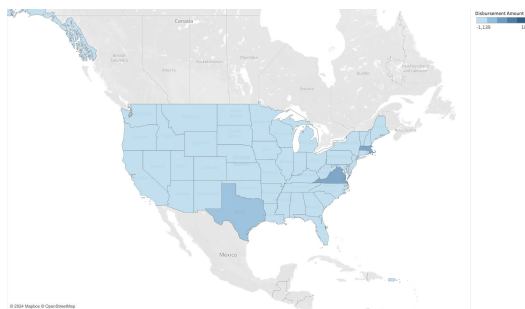
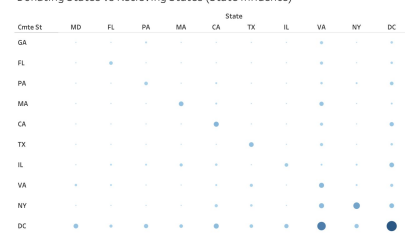
Campaign Spending by Year



Donations by Location - Click on State for Annual Spend by State

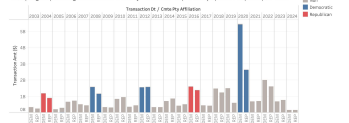


Donating States vs Recieving States (State Influence)

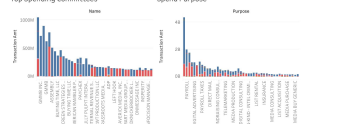


© 2020 Republic of SpentMoney
 Map based on US Census Bureau (2010) and US Census Bureau (2010). Color shows sum of Disbursement Amount. Details are shown for the top 10 states.

Campaign Spending vs Election Victory - Click for Top Donor/Spend Purpose per Year



Top Spending Committees





Main Insights

Individual: Highest ZIP codes of individual donations seems to be on the coasts, particularly the West Coast and the East Coast around Washington, DC, indicating regional variations in political donations. There is variation in ZIP codes with highest donation activity.

PACs: There is a strong relationship between PAC registered locations and individual donations. Based on only PAC donations, there does not appear to be a relationship between sum contribution and election outcome.

Super PACs: Super PACs donations have steadily increased, reaching \$2B in 2020. Super PACs behaved very strategically by pooling donations towards highly contested races with small margins of victory and by focusing on incumbent/challenger candidates depending on the political tide of that cycle.

Spend: Campaign spending to influence elections does not directly correlate to election outcome. Some additional insights - Spending increases dramatically in election years. Some, but not all committees spend outside of their states. Advertising and Payroll are the largest spending for campaigns.

