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Members of Congress as Contributors,

When Every Race Counts

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MARK J. ROZELL

CLYDE WILCOX

Michael J. Malbin

The Campaign Finance Institute and
University at Albany, SUNY

mmalbin@CFInst.org

Anne H. Bedlington

The Campaign Finance Institute

abedlington@CFInst.org

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1990 M. Street NW
SUITE 380
WASHINGTON, DC 20036
202-969-8890
202-969-5612 FAX

www.CFInst.org
info@CFInst.org

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ABSTRACT

What will happen to the role of political parties in congressional elections under the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act? As important as soft money has been, it is not the only mechanism expanding the parties' role. Equally important has been the growth of a complex set of networks among Members whose individual actions have been held together – like a spider's web – by the less visible glue provided by the parties inside Congress.

Contributions from Members' PCCs and PACs to other candidates went up 85% between 1994 and 1996 and another 75% between then and 2000. The Republican total surged in 1996 and then kept growing; the Democrats surged in 2000. Members in both parties focused on tight races, divided their money fairly evenly among incumbent, challenger and open seat candidates.

The standard explanation for Members' decisions to give is that contributors are trying to impress their colleagues to move up in the institution. But most top givers were secure in their leadership positions. They appeared not to be lobbying to change their relative positions *within* the party, but to be part of the majority.

Our most stunning finding: 15% of the House Democratic and Republican campaign committees' hard money receipts came from their Members. This kind of fundraising is likely to become even more important, when soft money is banned and hard money contribution limits go up. We expect to see a continued increase in Members' contributions to parties and candidates, and a further development of the party as a complex web of networked relationships.

We'll start with a story. The Second Congressional District of West Virginia stretches in a long, narrow band across the middle of the state, from the Potomac to the Ohio River. Suburban sprawl from Washington, D.C. is beginning to reach the small vacation towns of the Eastern Panhandle. The district itself sprawls: 270 miles to the southwest of the Panhandle is Charleston, the state's capital and largest city, with a population of 53,421.

For eighteen years, Bob Wise represented the district in Congress, winning reelection in 1998 with 73% of the vote. As long as Wise ran, it looked as if the seat would be his. But in 2000, Wise left the House to mount a successful challenge against the incumbent Republican Governor, Cecil Underwood. Most national Democrats thought the seat would be safe for their party, but Republicans leaders saw an opportunity. In 1996, Bill Clinton earned only 49% of the district's vote for President, compared to 40% for Bob Dole and 11% for Ross Perot. This was significantly worse than Clinton's 15-point margin statewide. More importantly, it meant that the base Democratic vote was not a solid majority.

Wise's decision to leave Congress attracted a strong Democratic field. Ken Hechler, the 86-year old four-term Secretary of State, was trying to return to the institution in which he served from 1959 until 1977. State Sen. Martha Walker was a respected legislator from the district's population center. The third candidate in the race was Jim Humphreys, a former two-term state Senator who had earned a great deal of

money in private law practice. He spent more than \$3.5 million of it to win the primary handily, with 42% of the vote.

The only Republican in the race was Shelly Moore Capito, a moderate, pro-choice state legislator who grew up in a political household as the daughter of the three-term GOP Governor, Arch Moore (1969-77, 1985-89). National Republicans saw this as a potentially tight race from the beginning. Capito filed her “Statement of Organization” with the Federal Election Commission in August 1999. During the remaining months of 1999, she raised \$269,000. Consider that to have been seed money. Individual contributions amounted to \$157,000, of which \$149,000 was itemized and \$124,050 of the itemized money came from West Virginians. In other words, about half of Capito’s seed money came from individual constituents. More than two-thirds of the rest came from the political action committees (PACs) of sitting Members of Congress (\$40,000), or Members’ principal campaign committees (PCCs) (\$44,000) or from party committees (\$5,000 from the National Republican Congressional Committee). This was a strong and early sign of support, signaling party leaders’ belief that Capito had a good chance.

Whatever the possibilities, Capito was starting behind. Shortly before the May 9 primary, the West Virginia poll showed Humphreys leading Capito by 55% to 21% for the November election, with the rest undecided. (Associated Press, May 3, 2000.) More ominously for the GOP candidate: Humphreys seemed prepared to spend whatever it would take to win. For example, to win the May 9 primary, Humphreys began airing commercials in October 1999. (Capito’s first commercials ran eleven months later, in September 2000). During the general election, Humphreys lent his campaign another \$3 million. If Capito was to have a chance, she would need help.

House Speaker Dennis Hastert came early and helped often. On Saturday, May 20, eleven days after the primary, the Speaker was the featured guest at a \$125-a-plate fundraiser at the Charleston Marriott. The event was not heavily attended, but generated favorable news coverage (Tuckwiller, 2000). By the end of the summer, presidential nominee George W. Bush, House Majority Leader Dick Armey, Conference Chairman J.C. Watts, Republican National Committee Chairman Jim Nicholson, and Sen. John McCain had all visited the district. Sen. McCain came back again in early November, as did Majority Whip Tom DeLay. (House Democratic Leader Dick Gephardt visited Humphreys' campaign in late October.) After Labor Day, the NRCC began running the first of a series of four rounds of advertising criticizing Humphreys. Capito's own ads began at about the same time. The campaign was going well. By early October, the West Virginia poll showed the race essentially to be even.

But to win, Capito had to stay on the air. Humphreys' final two loans to his campaign, for a total of \$460,000, came on October 27 and November 2. To counter this, Capito's campaign raised almost \$300,000 during the final two weeks. Two-thirds came from political committees. Many were business PACs, finally coming to see this as a race that could help determine which party controlled the 107th Congress. But during this push, \$63,000 also came Members' PACs and Members' PCCs. With the money she raised in these two weeks, Capito could put more than \$200,000 into her final media campaign. In the end, it all came together. She received 108,769 votes (48%) to Humphreys' 103,003 (46%), with 6% going to a Libertarian. George W. Bush's coattails may have helped: the new President carried the district by ten percentage points. But Capito needed, and got by, with a little help from some friends.

Two postscripts: (1) As a new Member of Congress, Capito supported the Shays-Meehan campaign finance reform bill. She was the principal sponsor of the so-called “Millionaire’s Amendment” in the House, a provision that raises the contribution limits for candidates who are running against self-financed opponents. (2) The 2002 election is shaping up as a rematch. Jim Humphries once again beat Martha Walker in the primary. This time, the margin was only 51-49. Former Sen. Walker, now a Public Service Commissioner, was supported by EMILY’s List, which ran a televised issue ad criticizing Humphreys’ for \$38,000 in late income tax payments. Ironically, the charge was the same as one the NRCC had used to advantage four years earlier. As of this writing, the respected *Cook Report* rates the general election as Leaning Republican.

Capito’s story is dramatic, but the elements are by no means unique. Six challengers managed to defeat incumbent House members in 2000. In almost all of these races, Members’ PACs, Members’ PCCs and party money were important to one or both of the candidates. For example, the Democratic Michael Ross defeated four-term Republican incumbent Jay Dickey in southern Arkansas’ Fourth District by 51%-49%. Dickey had voted to impeach President Clinton. According to *The Almanac of American Politics*, Clinton returned the favor by campaigning heavily for Ross, raising more than \$300,000 in his behalf. (The district includes Hope, the former President’s hometown.) Dickey, who refused to accept PAC contributions, raised \$1.7 million from individuals. He also received more than a quarter of a million dollars in “hard money” help from party-related sources (we are not including soft money in any of these races:) \$113,000 in various party committee contributions, \$66,000 in party coordinated expenditures,

\$12,116 from Members' PACs and another \$71,619 from PCCs. Ross also raised \$1.7 million – about the same as the incumbent. He was able to do this because – unlike many other Democrats – his money from the party and from Members fully matched his rival's: Ross raised almost \$50,000 from various party committees and benefited from \$66,150 in party coordinated expenditures. He also raised \$103,641 from Members' PACs and another \$46,000 from Members' PCCs. The mixture was different, but the bottom line from all four kinds of party-related sources was equal to Dickey's.

The other three successful Democratic challengers, all from California, each received important help from Members' PACs and PCCs: Jane Harman received a combined amount of about \$130,000; Susan Davis, about \$130,000; and Adam Schiff, about \$170,000. In each case, however, the defeated incumbents received even more: \$200,000 for Brian Bilbray's race against Davis; \$240,000 for Steven Kuyendall against Jane Harman, and \$240,000 for James Rogan against Schiff. In contrast, the two successful GOP challenges (Bob Simmons who defeated Sam Gejdensen in Connecticut and Mark Kennedy's narrow defeat of David Minge in Minnesota) were ones in which Members' PACs and PCCs were less engaged on either side of the race.

While the Members' PACs and PCCs may have been less important to Simmons and Kennedy, they were very important in other close races – particularly the open seats. Nine of these open-seat contests, including Capito's, were decided by a two-candidate margin of 53%-47% or less. Six of the nine were 51%-49% or closer. On average, the nine Republicans in these races received \$186,000 from Members' PACs and PCCs. (The median was \$170,000.) The nine Democrats received an average of \$125,000, or two-thirds as much. (The median was \$116,000.) The Republican won eight of these

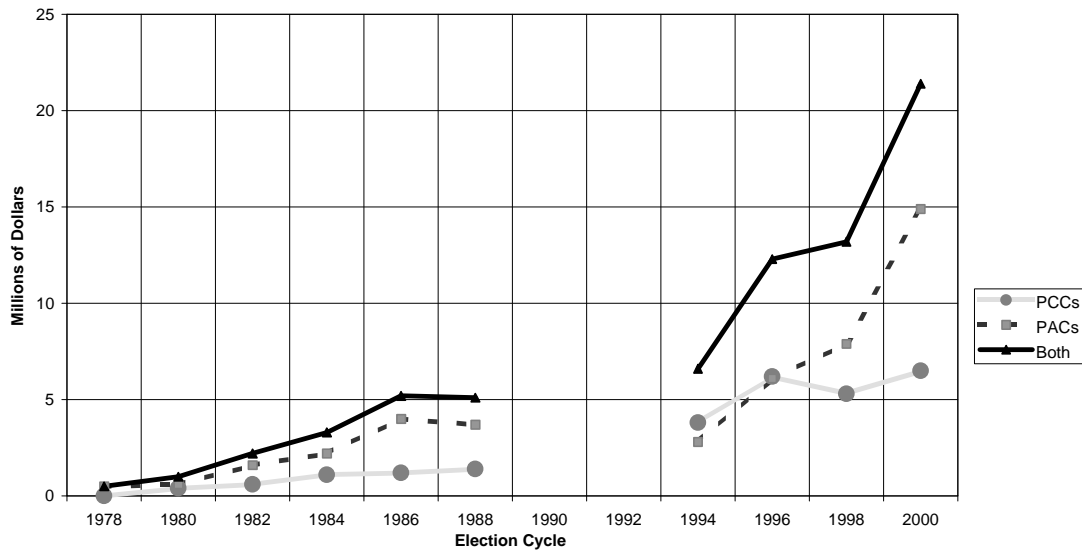
nine races. We have already seen that much of this money comes in at the end of the campaign, when it can be crucial. Since the Republicans managed to hold on to a majority in the House with only six votes to spare, every GOP Representative might well want to ask whether the party owes its control of the chamber to the effort the leaders put into stimulating Members' to contribute races where it would do the most good.

It seems clear that something important is happening – important not only for scholarly conceptions about party, but for the conduct of future elections under the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 (BCRA). Title I of the BCRA prohibits national political party committees, party officials, office holder and candidates from raising “soft money” party contributions that are outside the law’s size limits and source prohibitions. Soft money contributions to the party mushroomed over the past decade, from a relatively small base in 1992 to almost 40% of national party receipts in 1999-2000. Critics of the BCRA have argued that the ban on soft money in essence would deprive parties of their livelihood. Our stories about the 2000 election suggest a more complex situation. As important as soft money has been, it is not the only mechanism expanding the role of parties. Equally important has been the growth not of a top-down party, but of a complex set of networks among Members whose individual actions have been held together – like a spider’s web – by the less visible glue provided by the parties inside Congress.

When Ross Baker (1989) and Clyde Wilcox (1988, 1989) wrote about Members’ PACs and Member-to-Member contributions, they did so at a time when the phenomenon was relatively new and seemed to be growing. Members’ PACs first captured public

attention in 1978, when Rep. Henry Waxman created and used one of the first “leadership PACs” by a non-leader to give money to colleagues as part of his successful bid to become chair of the Energy and Commerce Committee’s Health subcommittee. At the time, Waxman’s \$24,000 in contributions were portrayed as if they had helped influence his colleagues’ decision to vote for him over the more senior, respected moderate, Richardson Preyer (Baker, 1989).

Figure 1
Contributions From All Members’ (House and Senate) PACs and PCCs
To All Candidates, 1978-2000 (\$ Millions)



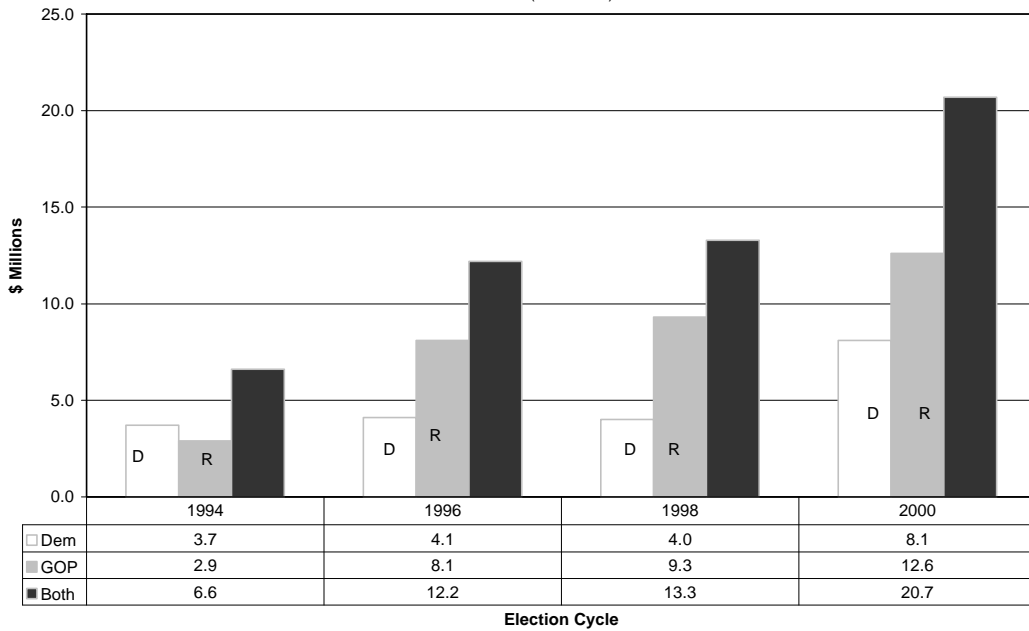
SOURCES: 1978-88: C. Wilcox, "Member to Member." 1994-2000: Compiled from FEC Data.

The contributions from Members’ PACs and PCCs grew from a total of about \$500,000 in 1978 to more than \$5 million in 1986 and 1988. While we have not yet examined data for the intervening years, the rate of growth appears to have leveled out from 1986 through 1994, then taken off. At exactly the same time as President Clinton’s example was teaching party leaders about how to use soft money to pay for issue ads, the leaders in Congress were hard at work to get their colleagues to contribute hard money to their colleagues, and potential colleagues, who were facing tough races. As Figure 1

shows, contributions from Members' PCCs and PACs doubled between 1994 and 1996, grew only slightly between 1996 and 1998, and then increased by 61% between 1998 and 2000.

It will not do, however, to leave our description in so aggregate a form. Senators with PACs give much less of their money as contributions than House Members, so this paper after Figure 2 will concentrate on House Members. (We plan to include the Senate in subsequent versions.) Within the House, the parties have come to behave in a similar manner, but this was not always so. In raw numbers, the story is fairly simple: the Democrats started out ahead in 1994, Republicans then surged forward. Because we do not yet have data for 1992, we do not know how much of this surge started before the 1994 election. Based on anecdotal memories, we believe there was some, but not a huge amount. The takeoff came in 1996. During that election cycle, Republican Members' PACs and PCCs gave 2.8 times as much as they did in 1993-94. Democratic giving went up by a scant 11%. The Democrats then stayed flat again between 1996 and 1998, while Republican levels increased by another 15%. Then, in the 2000 election cycle, the Democrats finally started behaving the way the Republicans did, coordinating their efforts to work for a majority. Democratic Member PAC and PCC contributions to candidates more than doubled between 1998 and 2000. They were now almost up to the levels Republicans had reached in the previous cycle. The Republicans continued to stay ahead, though, by increasing their own giving by 30%.

Figure 2
Democratic and Republican Members' (House and Senate)
PAC and PCC Contributions to Candidates, 1994-2000
 (\$ Millions)



The reasons for the growing importance of Member PAC and PCC contributions after 1994 seems to stem from the increased awareness among Members of how much is at stake for them in contested elections outside their own districts. Members of the two parties seemed to accept, and act on, that awareness at different times. Until the Republican landslide of 1994, Democrats had become complacent in their majority status, which the party had held since 1953. Most Democrats outside the formal leadership at that time saw Members' PACs and Member-to-Member contributions as relatively minor weapons in a battle that scarcely had to be joined.

Republicans were split between an older faction that despaired of winning control during their legislative careers and a more activist group that believed a majority was in their reach. The young activists, led by Newt Gingrich (R-GA), Vin Weber (R-MN) and Bob Walker (R-PA), created the Conservative Opportunity Society (COS), outside the

formal leadership, to pressure the leaders to sharpen the differences between the parties in the legislative arena to help the GOP win an electoral majority. In their view, the opportunity to focus the public's attention nationally on the policy differences between Democrats and Republicans was more important than to bargain politely inside the chamber for what they thought of as the crumbs off a table they had no role in setting.

By the late-1980s, COS's allies inside the leadership were Trent Lott (R-MS), the Whip, and Dick Cheney (R-WY), the conference chairman who had the support of both groups. Cheney was largely responsible for rewriting the party conference's rules to strengthen the leaders' hand in making committee appointments and selecting committee leaders. (Later party leaders used these powers to great advantage to help persuade fellow Republicans to contribute their money to close races.) He also started a program to increase Member-to-candidate contributions, but with only limited success. When Cheney left Congress in 1989 to become Secretary of Defense, the program withered until Bill Paxon (R-NY) replaced Guy Vander Jagt (R-MI) as chair of the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) in 1993, and was able to act with the full support of the party leadership. Looking back in a 1996 interview, Vander Jagt said that the leadership under Bob Michel, "Wanted a Republican majority but a lot of them didn't believe it was possible. . . . [T]he House had been a comfortable place. You kind of protected one another." (Frontline, 1996). Acting protectively meant, in part, that most Members would not give money directly to a challenger to defeat a sitting colleague. That changed under Gingrich and Paxon.

Figure 3
Democratic House Members Contributions (PACs and PCCs) to Incumbent, Challenger and Open Seat Candidates, 1994-2000 (\$ Millions)

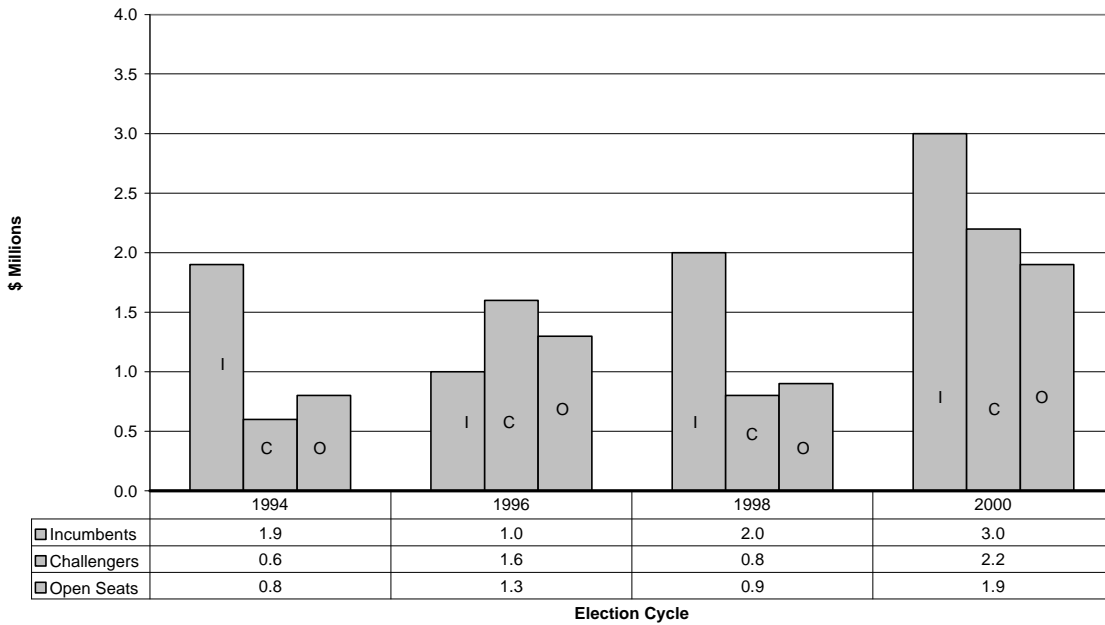
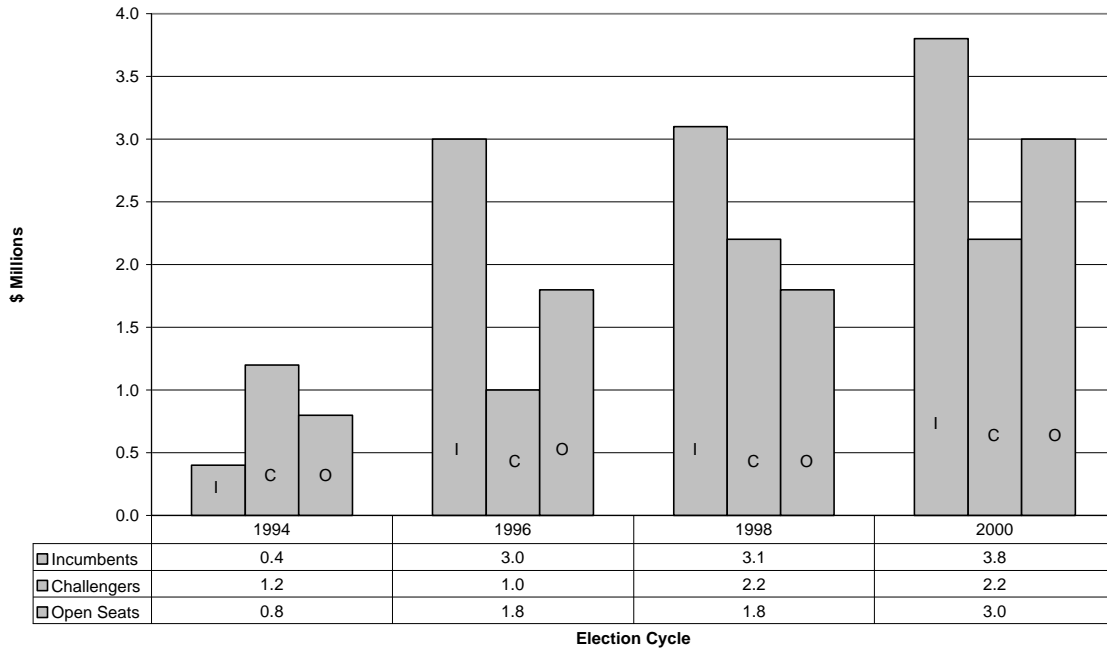


Figure 4
GOP House Members' Contributions (PACs and PCCs) to Incumbent, Challenger and Open Seat Candidates, 1994-2000 (\$ Millions)



The differences in the two parties' political positions express themselves through the division of Members' contributions as well as the raw totals. In Figures 3 and 4, we charted the contributions of House Democrats and Republicans in 1994-2000 to Incumbent, Challenger and Open Seat Candidates.

- House Democrats in 1994 mostly pursued incumbent protection (Figure 3) ; Republicans used almost all of their smaller pot of money for challengers and open seat candidates (Figure 4).
- In 1996, the House GOP used a now larger pot of money to protect new incumbents, but they also increased their investment in open seat races. The Democratic strategy mirrored the Republicans, as the new minority looked for challenger opportunities to unseat new incumbents, increasing their Members' support for these races from \$600,000 to \$1.6 million.
- In 1998, the Republicans continued their support for incumbents and open seat candidates, pouring all of their new money into challengers races. Speaker Gingrich and other House GOP leaders mistakenly thought President Clinton's pending impeachment would lead to major gains for their party in House races. That assumption is visible in the Members' contribution patterns. The Democrats apparently had similar thoughts, since they reduced support for challengers and open seat candidates while doubling the Members' contributions to incumbents.
- In 2000, the Republicans held their support for challengers at their previously high 1998 levels, while modestly increasing contributions to incumbents and giving a major boost to open set candidates. That same year, Democrats surged

in all categories, matching the GOP support for challengers. The one set of races in which Democrats lagged were for the open seats, where House Republicans gave three dollars for every two by the Democrats. As we noted earlier, the fact that Republicans won eight of the nine very close contests for the open seats could well have meant the difference between majority and minority control in the closely divided 107th Congress.

For a closer look at the Members' contributions in 2000, we have listed the top fifty recipients of these funds in Table 1 (excluding ones who ran in special elections.) The table lists candidates in descending order of the combined amount received from Members' PACs and PCCs. It also gives the candidate's status (incumbent, challenger or open seat candidate), the percentage of the two-party vote, and the percentage of the candidates' total receipts that came from Members' PACs and PCCs.

Table 1
Top 50 House Candidates Receiving
Contributions in 1999-2000 from Members' PACs and PCCs

Candidate	Pty	Status	Election %	Received from Members' PCCs (\$)	Received from Members' PACs (\$)	Combined Members' PACs + PCCs(\$)	Combined as % of Total Receipts
Fletcher, E. (KY-6)	R	I	60.3	65,250	175,057	240,307	9.6
Sherwood, D. (PA-10)	R	I	52.6	74,500	157,880	232,380	8.2
Rogers, M. (MI-8)	R	O	50.1	68,540	163,792	232,332	10.5
Nethercutt, G. (WA-5)	R	I	59.3	64,500	161,018	225,518	13.5
Kuykendall, S. (CA-36)	R	I	49.1	61,700	152,988	214,688	10.6
Hart, M. (PA-4)	R	O	59.0	63,750	143,014	206,764	12.0
Capito, S. (WV-2)	R	O	51.3	66,500	131,088	197,588	14.5
Rehberg, D. (MT-0)	R	O	52.7	64,750	130,920	195,670	9.1

Rogan, J. (CA-27)	R	I	45.7	45,500	140,305	185,805	2.7
Wilson, H. (NM-1)	R	I	50.7	54,497	122,951	177,448	7.9
Pirozzi, E. (CA-42)	R	C	36.8	102,043	71,000	173,043	19.8
Bilbray, B. (CA-49)	R	I	48.0	42,100	128,970	171,070	8.8
Hayes, R. (NC-8)	R	I	55.9	49,950	118,189	168,139	8.6
Holt, R. (NJ-12)	D	I	50.1	87,300	78,688	165,988	6.2
Honda, M. (CA-15)	D	O	56.5	72,199	90,980	163,179	7.6
Hoeffel, J. (PA-13)	D	I	53.7	78,300	83,440	161,740	9.1
Tiberi, P. (OH-12)	R	O	54.8	44,300	112,865	157,156	6.6
Maloney, J. (CT-5)	D	I	54.9	69,834	81,162	150,996	7.2
Northup, A. (KY-3)	R	I	54.5	26,500	123,800	150,300	5.2
Schiff, A. (CA-27)	D	C	54.3	66,500	82,573	149,073	3.4
McDonald, D. (WA-1)	R	C	43.6	28,147	120,661	148,808	10.1
Grucci, F. (NY-1)	R	C	58.2	47,500	100,940	148,440	9.3
Ferguson, M. (NJ-7)	R	O	51.2	25,503	121,480	146,983	6.1
Stoker, M. (CA-22)	R	C	45.8	47,350	98,615	145,965	17.8
Evans, L. (IL-17)	D	I	54.9	80,500	63,430	143,930	12.0
Stupak, B. (MI-1)	D	I	59.3	94,500	47,500	142,000	13.8
Koster, J. (WA-2)	R	O	47.4	21,397	120,440	141,837	12.7
Porter, J. (NV-1)	R	C	46.1	31,147	110,500	141,647	10.2
Tancredo, T. (CO-6)	R	I	56.1	56,125	83,578	139,703	10.7
Byrum, D. (MI-8)	D	O	49.9	49,735	89,751	139,486	6.6
Kline, J. (MN-6)	R	C	49.2	31,397	107,940	139,337	11.3
Schrock, E. (VA-2)	R	O	52.0	37,000	101,430	138,430	12.3
Keller, R. (FL-8)	R	O	50.9	26,800	110,237	137,037	10.2
Jordan, E. (KY-3)	D	C	45.5	58,750	77,637	136,387	7.9
Chapin, L. (FL-8)	D	O	49.2	50,000	86,076	136,076	8.1
Graves, S. (MO-6)	R	O	52.1	18,500	117,278	135,778	12.2
Johnson, J. (NY-2)	R	O	41.9	23,050	111,455	134,505	12.5
Casey, P. (PA-10)	D	C	47.4	65,200	69,000	134,200	8.3
Larsen, R. (WA-2)	D	O	52.3	53,000	80,562	133,562	8.4
Cunneen, J. (CA-15)	R	O	43.5	37,850	95,000	132,850	9.2
Baca, J. (CA-42)	D	I	63.2	96,200	35,250	131,450	9.3
Baker, M. (IL-17)	R	C	45.1	33,900	96,129	130,029	13.7
Smith, D. (UT-2)	R	C	42.5	37,500	91,098	128,598	7.6
Zimmer, D. (NJ-12)	R	C	49.9	29,000	96,940	125,940	5.6
Matheson, J. (UT-2)	D	C	57.5	44,500	78,500	123,000	9.0
Greenleaf, S. (PA-13)	R	C	46.4	24,000	98,927	122,927	8.2
Rodriguez, R. (CA-20)	R	C	46.3	21,984	100,358	122,342	10.5
Keenan, N. (MT-0)	D	O	47.3	42,650	79,568	122,218	6.4
Forbes, M. (NY-1)	D	I	n.a.	72,735	48,583	121,318	8.9
Kirk, M.	R	O	51.2	92,993	27,299	120,292	5.8

The partisan balance on this list favors the Republicans, who outnumber the Democrats by two-to-one in the top fifty, including the top twelve positions. But the balance would have been closer if we had cut the list at sixty instead of fifty: Democrats occupied nine of the eleven spots in #51-61. The group of fifty also includes 17 incumbents, 15 challengers and 18 open seat candidates. More importantly, virtually every one of the fifty was in a tight race. Even the three incumbents on the list who won with higher percentages had good reasons to be receiving support from their colleagues.

- Ernest Fletcher (R-KY) was a freshman challenged by the former incumbent, Scotty Baesler, who had stepped down to run for the Senate in 1998.
- George Nethercutt (R-WA) faced a heavy issue advertising campaign from U.S. Term Limits for having broken his pledge to leave the House after three terms.
- Bart Stupak (D-MI) had suspended his campaign, ceased raising funds, and considered stepping down, after a family tragedy in May 2000. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee's (DCCC) chairman, Patrick Kennedy (D-RI), orchestrated contributions from colleagues to persuade Stupak to stay in the race. (Barone and Cohen, 2001.) More than \$100,000 of Stupak's \$142,000 from other Members came in June.

Finally, the table shows that the contributions coming into these races from Members' PACs and PCCs meant a lot to the candidates. The last column in this table gives the percentage of a candidate's total receipts that came from these sources. The

median percentage for this group of fifty was between 9 and 10 percent of total receipts of roughly \$1.5 million. When we have analyzed the contributions by date, we suspect that they will be an even larger percentage of funds raised during the final month.

The list of top givers is a stark contrast from the list of top receivers. Table 2 shows the thirty most active contributors to other candidates in 2000.

Table 2
Top 30 House Members Giving Contributions in 1999-2000
To House Candidates from their Members' PACs and PCCs

House Member	Pty	Given by the Member's PCC (\$)	Given by the Member's PAC (\$)	Combined Member's PCCs + PACs (\$)
Gephardt, R.	D	0	1,017,500	1,017,500
Pelosi, N.	D	133,709	792,800	926,509
Delay, T.	R	41,000	844,391	885,391
Hastert, J.	R	35,000	752,505	787,505
Hoyer, S.	D	126,000	645,500	771,500
Armey, R.	R	0	736,584	736,584
Rangel, C.	D	174,500	399,500	574,000
Boehner, J.	R	1,996	557,432	559,428
Dreier, D.	R	5,000	511,549	516,549
Waxman, H.	D	54,000	351,000	405,000
Lewis, J.	R	89,849	260,000	349,849
McCrery, J.	R	3,000	336,500	339,500
Tauzin, W.	R	26,060	291,055	317,115
Oxley, M.	R	56,100	234,500	290,600
Menendez, R.	D	29,000	245,713	274,713
Doolittle, J.	R	101,000	156,000	257,000
Crane, P.	R	56,000	197,000	253,000
Hobson, D.	R	44,500	186,303	230,803
Thomas, W.	R	44,000	182,000	226,000
Weller, G.	R	3,000	210,500	213,500
Blunt, R.	R	4,000	202,429	206,429
Bonior, D.	D	0	197,720	197,720
Watts, J. C.	R	2,000	186,156	188,156
DeLauro, R.	D	169,500	0	169,500
Blumenauer, E.	D	2,250	153,500	155,750
Frost, M.	D	0	135,250	135,250
Obey, D.	D	0	131,000	131,000
Barton, J.	R	5,500	124,500	130,000
Cox, C.	R	121,000	0	121,000
Kennedy, P.	D	90,500	23,000	113,500

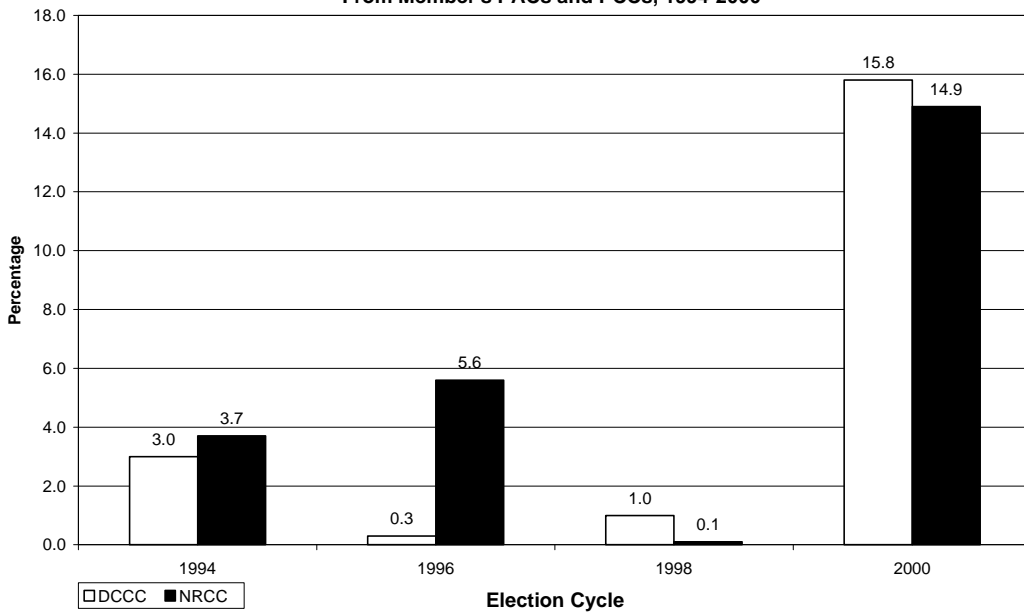
The top party leaders – Dennis Hastert, Dick Armey, Tom DeLay and Dick Gephardt – were all at or near the top of the list. Another six of the top thirty were jockeying to move up to a committee chairmanship or to a higher leadership position: Bill Thomas and Phil Crane were seeking the Ways and Means Committee chairmanship; Billy Tauzin and Mike Oxley wanted to chair the Commerce Committee; Steny Hoyer and Nancy Pelosi (and at a more indeterminate time, Martin Frost) wanted to move up the party leadership ladder. These Members fit the standard explanation for what motivates contributors: people who appear to have stepped up their contribution activity in part to impress colleagues. However, there are two problems with this standard explanation. First, most of the top givers were fairly secure in their party or committee leadership positions. They appeared not to be lobbying to change their relative positions *within* the party, but fighting to be part of the majority – to be a committee or subcommittee chair, and not a ranking minority member. The second problem with the theory is that it did not match the way most aspirants for committee chairmanship were behaving. Thomas, Crane, Tauzin and Oxley were conspicuous givers. But 2000 was a year in which virtually all of the committee chairs changed, because of a three-term limit that the Republicans adopted at the end of 1994. Of the 22 Republicans who were identified in press reports as serious candidates for chairmanships in December 2000, only six had contributed unusually large amounts of money to other candidates. The other 16 were much further down in the rank order.

Of course, these are only impressionistic reactions to what we can see on a list. For future research, we have been coding all of the party leaders, committee leaders and aspirants from 1994-2000 to see more systematically whether these Members behave

differently from others. We also plan to sort every Members' PAC and PCC contribution by date, as well as by the competitive status of each recipient. Our review of the Capito race showed that Members' money was important for her at the seed money stage and again at the end. Capito's seed money contributions obviously represented a strong statement by party leaders, before a primary, that helped assure there would not be a primary challenge. We do not know how unusual it was for a candidate in a potentially close race to receive so much money early, or whether this form of early party money is a new phenomenon. Late money is another story: October support from the party has been an important factor in close races for as long as we have been tracking campaign finance. Our findings are consistent with these long standing patterns, but they are forcing us to expand our definition of party activity.

Our last finding was the most surprising to us, and potentially perhaps the most far reaching. Most accounts separate their treatments of Member PACs and PCCs from discussions of the national party committees. This separation can no longer be sustained. Figure 5 shows that 15% of the DCCC's and NRCC's total hard money receipts came from Members' PACs or PCCs.

Figure 5
Percentage of Congressional Party Campaign Committees'
Total (Hard Money) Receipts That Came
From Member's PACs and PCCs, 1994-2000



We consider these numbers to be stunning. For some time, political scientists have described the national party committees as if they were relatively disembodied sets of professionals, working together with professional campaign consultants who perhaps had once been employed by the committees, responsible for little more than providing money and campaign services – “economies of scale” – for their otherwise independent candidates. The picture emerging in the post-Gingrich years is more complicated, and more interesting.

Anyone who follows elections was made aware during the 2000 campaign season of the programs House Republican and Democratic party leaders used to set formal guidelines for Members’ contributions. (Rice 1999; Van Dongen 2000; Allen 2000; Bresnahan 2000; Herbelig 2001; Cillizza 2002.) Our numbers show that the effort was remarkably successful. (Table 3 lists the top givers to the party committees.)

Table 3
Top 50 House Members Giving Contributions in 1999-2000
To Party Committees from their Members' PACs and PCCs

House Member	Pty	Given by the Member's PCC (\$)	Given by the Member's PAC (\$)	Combined Member's PCCs + PACs (\$)
McIntosh, D.	R	925,000	0	925,000
Cox, C.	R	752,000	0	752,000
Dreier, D.	R	725,000	16,000	741,000
Armey, R.	R	602,500	15,000	617,500
Hastert, D.	R	480,623	20,000	500,623
Lewis, J.	R	490,000	0	490,000
Rangel, C.	D	408,500	15,000	423,500
Delay, T.	R	260,100	125,000	385,100
Matsui, R.	D	320,000	0	320,000
Lewis, J.	D	304,000	0	304,000
Kennedy, P.	D	285,000	11,075	296,075
Deutsch, P.	D	150,000	130,000	280,000
Tauzin, W.	R	270,000	400	270,400
Davis, T.	R	270,000	0	270,000
Oberstar, J.	D	269,450	0	269,450
Pryce, D.	R	255,000	10,000	265,000
Forbes, M.	D	260,000	0	260,000
Thomas, W.	R	252,500	0	252,500
Menendez, R.	D	235,000	16,787	251,787
Danner, P.	D	250,000	0	250,000
Markey, E.	D	233,000	0	233,000
Hinojosa, R.	D	216,000	0	216,000
Pelosi, N.	D	146,500	60,000	206,500
Hutchinson, A.	R	202,000	0	202,000
Herger, W.	R	201,240	0	201,240
Tanner, J.	D	196,488	0	196,488
Skelton, I.	D	193,000	0	193,000
Delauro, R.	D	191,750	0	191,750
Miller, G.	D	189,750	0	189,750
Stump, B.	R	186,520	0	186,520
Waxman, H.	D	159,300	20,000	179,300
Moakley, J.	D	177,500	0	177,500
Lafalce, J.	D	175,253	0	175,253
Walsh, J.	R	175,100	0	175,100
Combest, L.	R	175,000	0	175,000
Conyers, J.	D	175,000	0	175,000
Rogers, H.	R	175,000	0	175,000
Oxley, M.	R	170,700	0	170,700
Watts, J.C.	R	165,000	(479)	164,521
Dingell, J.	D	162,150	0	162,150
Bryant, E.	R	161,000	0	161,000
Camp, D.	R	143,800	15,000	158,800
Houghton, A.	R	157,750	0	157,750
Hoyer, S.	D	151,500	5,000	156,500
Bonior, D.	D	111,000	43,000	154,000
Baker, R.	R	152,000	0	152,000
Nussle, J.	R	136,000	15,000	151,000
Vento, B.	D	149,000	0	149,000
Borski, R.	D	147,000	0	147,000

The table shows that most of the massive increase in contributions from Members to party committees came from Members' PCCs. That was the simplest vehicle for an increase, because the Federal Election Campaign Act explicitly allows unlimited transfers from Members' principle campaign committees to party committees. Members' PACs may give only \$15,000 to the national parties and \$5,000 to any other political committee, including a state or local party committee. Most Members seem to have been satisfied to write one check, and let the national party do the work. Some Members, however, were willing to take an extra step. For example, The 20th District Florida Federal PAC, which is associated with Peter Deutsch, a Democratic elected in 1992, wrote eighteen \$5,000 checks, each to a different State Democratic Party committee, and each written on September 27, 2000. There will undoubtedly be more such activity in the future, when "hard money" becomes the only money the parties can use.

The activity registered in Table 3 shows that the party committees are not by any means disembodied. These are parties in which the members are heavily involved in supplying money to candidates and to the parties, while party committees provide candidates with the resources for coordinated message themes. The picture is not that of a party as a single committee or set of relationships. Rather, we are seeing the congressional party as a complex set of interwoven networks that weave their way in and out of the institution. The leaders still lead, but they have a great deal of help.

These kinds of relationships no doubt will become even more important once the BCRA takes effect. The parties can no longer raise soft money, but individual

contributions to Members can double from \$1,000 to \$2,000. This change could produce more hard money – perhaps substantially more – for the Members to give to their parties and to their potential colleagues. But even if it does not, what has happened so far should be enough to cause us to rethink our paradigms.

In a classic 1917 book, *The History of Legislative Procedures Before 1825*, Ralph V. Harlow described parties as organizations that originated within legislatures; the electoral function came second (Harlow, 1917). While it would be too pat to return to Harlow, the importance of what has happened should not be missed. The electoral parties are changing, and the impetus for one important set of these changes is coming from inside what was once quaintly referred to as the “party-in-government.” As long as party control remains in doubt, the Members of the “party in government” have a major personal stake in the collective fate of the “party in the election.” While that situation persists, we expect the Members to continue to support their current and potential colleagues. Indeed, we expect them to explore new avenues to achieve similar ends. For example, after House Democratic Leader Richard Gephardt asked colleagues to give up to \$500,000 each for the 2002 election, Rep. Martin Frost used his PAC to collect \$215,000 in “bundled” contributions, as of June 30, 2002 (Wallison, 2002). (Frost would like to succeed Gephardt as leader if Gephardt were to step down to run for President.) Once the BCRA takes effect, therefore, and national parties have to rely on “hard money” to support their candidates, we expect to see a continued increase in Member contributions, and a further development of the party as a complex web of networked relationships.

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