



## **NAMES IN THE NEWS: MERCK & CO.**

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On Friday, Feb. 2, Texas Gov. Rick Perry signed an executive order mandating that schoolgirls get vaccinated against the human papillomavirus, or HPV, making it the first state in the nation to have such a requirement. Lawmakers in at least 17 other states are considering similar proposals this year.<sup>1</sup>

Merck & Co., a New-Jersey based drug company, has the only approved HPV vaccine. Approved by the Food and Drug Administration in June 2006, Merck's Gardisal vaccinates against strains of the HPV responsible for most cases of cervical cancer.

Since school vaccination requirements are decided mostly by state legislatures, Merck is now targeting the states to pass legislation requiring the use of their vaccine.<sup>2</sup>

To date, Gov. Rick Perry has received \$21,000 from the pharmaceutical giant's political action committee. Among gubernatorial candidates who received contributions from Merck, Perry was second only to former California Gov. Gray Davis, who received \$28,000.

Since the 2000 election cycle, the drug company has contributed \$2.46 million to state-level candidates and party committees, doling their money out almost equally to both parties. Democratic committees received just over \$1 million and Republicans \$1.4 million. Individuals employed by Merck gave an additional \$2.5 million to state-level politics.

#### **MERCK CONTRIBUTIONS TO STATE POLITICS, 2000-2006**

<b>CYCLE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
2000	\$550,894
2002	\$764,126
2004	\$641,082
2006*	\$504,250
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,460,352</b>

\* 2006 data collection is ongoing; totals may increase.

Merck has helped finance races in forty states since the 2000 election cycle, when the Institute began collecting contribution data in all 50 states. Merck has focused intently on its home base, New Jersey, as well as giving in Florida, California and Pennsylvania. Combined, these four states have received more than \$1 million from Merck, or 44 percent of the company's total contributions.

#### **WHERE THE MONEY WENT**

Legislators have been the primary recipients of Merck's financial largesse. Winning candidates and incumbent lawmakers not up for re-election received \$1.48 million, 60 percent of Merck's total contributions. By comparison, legislative candidates who lost or withdrew from the elections received \$95,810.

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<sup>1</sup> HPV Vaccine [on-line]; available from <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/health/HPVvaccine.htm>; Internet; accessed Jan. 31, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Liz Austin Peterson, "Merck Lobbies States to Require Cervical-Cancer Vaccine For Girls," *Pocono Record*, Feb. 1, 2007 [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://www.poconorecord.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070201/NEWS01/702010318>; Internet; accessed Feb. 2, 2007.

State party committees were next on Merck's list, particularly those in New Jersey and Florida, which received \$201,550 and \$176,000, respectively, or 60 percent of the \$630,225 doled out to party committees. Merck also gave \$9.84 million to support a 2005 California ballot measure, Proposition 78, which would have authorized the state to contract with pharmaceutical companies to purchase drugs at a reduced price. The measure failed.

At \$360 for the three-shot Gardisal regimen, Merck could generate billions in sales if it is successful in its efforts to persuade the states to require the use of the vaccine.

**MERCK CONTRIBUTIONS BY STATE, 2000-2006\***

<b>STATE</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
<i>New Jersey</i>	\$317,600
<i>Florida</i>	\$256,000
<i>California</i>	\$251,439
<i>Pennsylvania</i>	\$249,775
<i>Texas</i>	\$158,143
<i>Virginia</i>	\$135,750
<i>New York</i>	\$118,025
<i>Illinois</i>	\$96,925
<i>Ohio</i>	\$93,570
<i>Georgia</i>	\$85,807
<i>Missouri</i>	\$57,500
<i>West Virginia</i>	\$52,250
<i>North Carolina</i>	\$48,000
<i>Washington</i>	\$47,850
<i>Kansas</i>	\$47,753
<i>Arkansas</i>	\$44,390
<i>Louisiana</i>	\$40,450
<i>Kentucky</i>	\$40,225
<i>Alabama</i>	\$36,000
<i>Mississippi</i>	\$31,700
<i>New Mexico</i>	\$31,300
<i>Nevada</i>	\$27,750
<i>Oregon</i>	\$27,500
<i>Oklahoma</i>	\$25,600
<i>South Carolina</i>	\$24,150
<i>Utah</i>	\$21,250
<i>Indiana</i>	\$17,000
<i>Idaho</i>	\$16,150
<i>Maryland</i>	\$13,650
<i>Iowa</i>	\$8,550
<i>South Dakota</i>	\$8,200
<i>Colorado</i>	\$8,100
<i>Connecticut</i>	\$7,250
<i>Vermont</i>	\$6,100
<i>North Dakota</i>	\$3,250

Nebraska	\$2,550
Delaware	\$1,350
New Hampshire	\$800
<i>Maine</i>	\$600
Montana	\$100
<b>TOTAL \$2,460,352</b>	

\* 2006 data collection is ongoing; totals may increase.

• States in italics currently have legislative proposals which would require the use of the HPV vaccine.