

# ANALYSIS OF WISCONSIN'S 1998 ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN FINANCES

By Denise Roth Barber  
October 24, 2000

**Total 1998 dollars: \$9,550,207**

Statewide Total: \$4,041,397

Legislative Total: \$5,508,810

**Total number of votes: 1,760,836**

Average raised per vote \$5.42

Money Raised by Winners:	<b>\$7,032,065</b>
Money Raised by General Election Losers:	<b>\$2,013,330</b>
Money Raised by Primary Election Losers:	<b>\$ 504,812</b>

## *Dollars by Office*

<b>Office</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Average/Candidate</b>
Governor	\$3,461,880	\$247,277
Attorney General	\$493,128	\$123,282
Secretary of State	\$71,146	\$14,229
Treasurer	\$15,242	\$3,048
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>\$4,041,396</b>	<b>\$144,336</b>
Assembly	\$3,541,372	\$16,864
Senate	\$1,967,438	\$54,651
<b>Legislative Total</b>	<b>\$5,508,810</b>	<b>\$22,394</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$9,550,206</b>	<b>\$34,855</b>

## *The Races*

Candidates vied for four statewide and 116 legislative offices. The statewide races were governor, secretary of state, attorney general, and treasurer. The legislative races consisted of 99 House races and 17 Senate races.

While all four of the statewide races were contested, almost a third (35 of 116) of the Legislative seats were uncontested. The majority of the legislative races had incumbents seeking re-election (96 of 116) and the incumbents in all four statewide races sought re-election.

### *The Candidates*

<b>CANDIDATES</b>	<b>Republican</b>	<b>Democrat</b>	<b>3rd Party</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Incumbents</b>	<b>Challengers</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	5	5	13	23	4	19	0
<b>Legislative</b>	114	112	21	247	96	75	76
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>76</b>

The Candidates In the statewide races, 19 challengers sought to oust the four incumbents seeking re-election, while in the legislative races, 74 candidates challenged 96 incumbents. Democrats and Republicans were equally matched in both statewide and legislative races, while third party candidates had a relatively insignificant presence.

### *The Results*

Prior to the elections, Republicans had a slim, two-seat majority in the Senate (17 Republicans, 15 Democrats, with one of the seats vacant) but Democrats gained a one-seat majority (17 Democrats, 16 Republicans).

The Assembly remained in the Republican majority. Prior to the elections, 52 Republicans and 43 Democrats were in the Assembly, with four seats being vacant. Post-election, 55 Republicans were in the Assembly with 44 Democrats.

<b>WINNERS</b>	<b>Republican</b>	<b>Democrat</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Incumbents</b>	<b>Challengers</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	2	2	4	4	0	0
<b>Legislative</b>	63	53	116	92	4	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20</b>

In the statewide races, all four incumbents seeking re-election won. Gov. Tommy Thompson won easily over Democrat challenger Ed Garvey, making him the first Wisconsin governor since World War II to be elected to serve four terms, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

### *Total Money Raised*

All the races combined in 1998 garnered a total of \$9.55 million in campaign contributions. Of that, 42 percent (\$4 million) was raised in the statewide races and 58 percent (\$5.5 million) was raised in legislative races.

<b>RACE</b>	<b>Republican</b>	<b>Democrat</b>	<b>3rd Party</b>	<b>Write In</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	\$3,250,320	\$787,390	\$3,687	\$0	<b>\$4,041,397</b>
<b>Legislative</b>	\$3,720,469	\$1,764,381	\$18,880	\$5,081	<b>\$5,508,810</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,970,789</b>	<b>\$2,551,771</b>	<b>\$22,567</b>	<b>\$5,081</b>	<b>\$9,550,207</b>

Excluding political party contributions and candidate self-financing, 18,436 contributors gave above the reporting threshold of \$20 a total of \$8,346,028. These contributors represent a fraction of one percent of the voting age population (3.9 million)

The 114 Republican legislative candidates raised a total of \$3.7 million, twice as much as the 112 Democratic candidates who raised \$1.8 million. Third-party candidates raised \$18,880. In the statewide races, Republicans raised four times as much as the Democrats, and third-party candidates were not even in contention

### ***Wisconsin's 1998 Campaign Finance Laws***

Contributions in excess of \$20 must be reported. The table below shows the contribution limits for each office sought.

<b>Office</b>	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Committee</b>
Governor	\$10,000	\$43,128
Lt. Governor	\$10,000	\$12,939
Atty General	\$10,000	\$21,564
Treasurer	\$10,000	\$8,625
Sec. Of State	\$10,000	\$8,625
State Senate	\$1,000	\$1,000
State Assembly	\$500	\$500

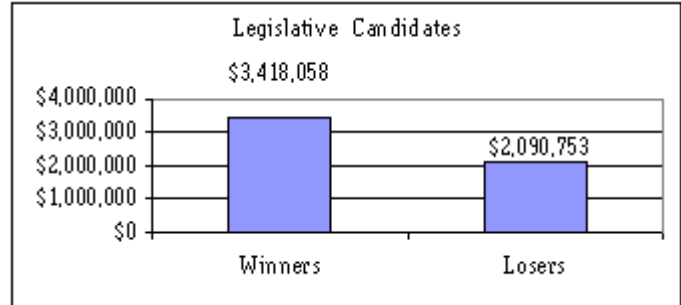
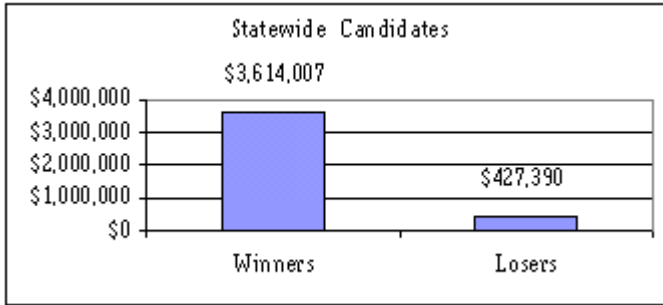
Candidates may elect to receive public funding from the state. Should they do so, they are required to comply with spending limits, which vary among offices sought (see table below).

<b>Office</b>	<b>Spending Limit</b>	<b>Self-Contributions</b>
Governor	\$1,078,200	\$20,000
Lt. Governor	\$323,475	\$20,000
Atty General	\$539,100	\$20,000
Treasurer	\$215,625	\$20,000
Sec. Of State	\$215,625	\$20,000
Senate	\$34,500	\$2,000
House	\$17,250	\$1,000

### **Winners & Losers, Incumbents & Challengers**

#### Incumbents vs. Challengers

Incumbents raised a total of \$6.3 million - four times more than was raised by challengers (\$1,452,112). The long-time incumbent, Gov. Tommy Thompson, raised half of that total. He raised \$3 million. In the legislative races, incumbents raised \$2.7 million, almost three times the total raised by challengers. Candidates in open races raised a total of \$1.8 million.



### Winners vs. Losers

Winners, with a total of \$7 million, raised almost three times as much as the general- and primary-election losers combined, who raised \$2 million and \$500,000, respectively. Winners of statewide races raised \$3.6 million, compared to the \$427,000 raised by statewide losers. Legislative winners raised \$3.4 million, significantly more than those who lost, \$2.1 million.

### **Why Winners Win**

Of the 120 winners, 97, or 81 percent, were incumbents. Further, candidates who raised the most money won 85 percent of the races. Candidates who had either or both advantages won 92 percent of the time. Only nine (8 percent) of the races were won by candidates who had neither advantage. Clearly, both incumbency and money are significant factors in winning elections, and when a candidate has both on their side, victory is all but guaranteed.

## **WHO GIVES**

### **Sources of Funds**

The following table shows the breakdown of contributions by sector, sorted from the largest percentage of total dollars to the smallest. Not included in this total is money given by contributors whose economic interest could not be identified, which accounts for 10 percent of the contributions analyzed for this report.

SECTOR	1998 TOTAL \$	% of 1998 TOTAL
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	\$1,308,330	15.2%
General Business	\$1,032,042	12.0%
Health	\$831,676	9.7%
Construction	\$791,144	9.2%
Political Parties	\$637,760	7.4%
Non-Business Interests	\$619,081	7.2%
Candidate Self-Finance	\$576,420	6.7%
Public Funding	\$561,139	6.5%
Lawyers & Lobbyists	\$463,648	5.4%
Labor	\$440,095	5.1%
Natural Resource Development	\$406,345	4.7%
Agriculture	\$315,006	3.7%
Communications & Electronics	\$309,359	3.6%
Transportation	\$275,359	3.2%
Ideology	\$25,158	0.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$8,592,562</b>	<b>100%</b>

The following is a brief analysis of contributions within each sector:

**Finance, Insurance and Real Estate: 15.2 percent**

The finance, insurance and real estate industries gave \$1.3 million in 1998. The Wisconsin Realtor's PAC was the lead contributor with \$66,180. Second was the Wisconsin Bankers Association with \$40,527.

**General Business: 12.0 percent**

This broad category encompasses manufacturing, food and beverage sales, tobacco products, business and general services, recreation and live entertainment, hotels, motels and resorts, and gambling interests. In 1998, these businesses gave a total of \$1.03 million. The largest contributor in this category, with contributions totaling \$35,170, was the Tavern Industry PAC. The second-largest business contributor was Ira Greenburg, president of Promotions Unlimited, a manufacturing and distribution firm, and his wife, Lorraine. Together, they gave a total of \$20,000 -- \$10,000 each -- all of which went to Tommy Thompson's gubernatorial campaign.

**Health: 9.7 percent**

The health industry, which consists of health professionals, medical institutions, pharmaceutical and health-product companies, gave a total of \$831,676.

The largest contributor within this industry was the Wisconsin Physicians PAC, which contributed a total of \$30,700. The Wisconsin Dental PAC, which contributed \$19,874, was second largest.

### **Construction: 9.2 percent**

Construction interests, which consist of contractors and homebuilders, suppliers of building materials and equipment, architects and engineers, gave a total of \$791,144. The Wisconsin Builders PAC was the largest contributor among the construction interests, giving \$59,400. Second was the Association Builders PAC, which gave \$21,414.

### **Political Parties: 7.4 percent**

Political party PACs and members of political parties supplied \$637,760 in 1998.

The largest contributor of party money was the Republican Assembly Campaign Committee, which doled out \$77,588 to 13 Assembly candidates. The second largest contributor was the Democrat Assembly Campaign Committee, which gave \$69,150 to 35 Assembly candidates.

Candidate pass-through money, which is money raised by one candidate and then contributed to another candidate, totaled \$247,682. Republican candidates exchanged \$194,790, while Democratic candidates traded \$48,878. Gov. Thompson was the largest recipient of pass-through money with \$22,210.

### **Non-Business Interests: 7.2 percent**

This category comprises non-business interests, such as clergy, teachers, military, government employees, tribal governments, non-profit institutions, artists and retirees. Contributions from these entities totaled \$619,081 million.

Barbara Lynch, a retiree, was the second-largest contributor within this category, giving \$7,250 - \$5,000 of which went to Thompson. Another retiree, Esther Leah Ritz, gave \$6,800 - the second largest in this category,

### **Candidate Self-Finance: 6.7 percent**

Money from candidates' personal coffers to their own campaigns came to a total of \$576,420. Republican Tom Sykora, winning candidate from Assembly District 67, gave his own campaign \$100,500 -- almost 20 percent of the total. Tim Michels, who lost his bid for Senate District 13 in the primary, gave his campaign \$80,500.

### **Public Funding: 6.5 percent**

A total of \$561,139 came from the Wisconsin Elections Campaign Fund. A total of 74 candidates opted to receive these public funds by agreeing to spending limits specific to the office for which they were running.

### **Lawyers and Lobbyists: 5.4 percent**

Lawyers and lobbyists contributed \$463,648 in 1998. The top two contributors were Lawyers Active in WI PAC, with total contributions of \$15,400, and Frank Daily, who gave \$8,850 to Thompson's race for governor.

Labor: 5.1 percent In 1998, labor unions contributed \$440,095 - the majority of which went to Democrats, as can be expected.

The Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC) PAC was the largest contributing union, giving \$67,889 to candidates. The Wisconsin Truck Operators (W-TON) PAC was the second largest union contributor at \$27,870.

### **Natural Resource Development: 4.7 percent**

This category includes forestry and forest products, mining, oil and gas, utilities, environmental services, waste management, fisheries and wildlife, grazing interests and commercial fishing industries. Total contributions from the industries within this sector were \$406,345 million in 1998.

Waste Management Employees PAC was the largest contributor at \$36,150, and Coastal Employee Action Fund was the second-largest contributor with \$23,000

### **Agriculture: 3.7 percent**

The agricultural industry gave a total of \$315,006 in contributions in 1998. The Volunteers for Agriculture (VFA) PAC was the largest contributor with \$19,571, and David and Lolita Kachel, who are with Wisconsin Dairy Supply, were the second-largest with total contributions of \$9,840.

### **Communications & Electronics: 3.6 percent**

The communications and electronics industry consists of printing and publishing, TV and movie production and distribution, telephone services, and electronics. In 1998, these entities gave \$309,359.

The largest contributor within this industry was the Ameritech WI State PAC, with contributions of \$20,920. The AT&T PAC of Wisconsin, with a total of \$15,590, was the second-largest contributor.

### **Transportation: 3.2 percent**

The transportation industry includes trucks, automobiles, airlines, boats and tourism services. In 1998, this industry contributed a total of \$275,359.

The Transportation Political Education League was the largest contributor by far, giving a total of \$18,000. The Council of Auto and Truck Retail PAC, with \$15,550 in contributions, was second largest.

**Ideology: 0.3 percent**

Ideological contributors -- composed of organizations that work on public-policy issues such as human rights, gun control, fiscal and tax policies, abortion, and environmental concerns - contributed a total of \$25,158. The largest contributor was the Planned Parenthood Advocates PAC, with donations of \$6,400. Close behind was the NRA Political Victory Fund, which contributed a total of \$3,500.

**TOP CONTRIBUTORS**

The tables below list the top 10 PACs and individual contributors to the Wisconsin 1998 races analyzed for this report. Excluded are political-party contributors, candidate contributions to their own campaigns, and public funds.

<b>Top Individual Givers</b>	<b>Employer</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>TOTAL \$</b>
Strong, Donna & Richard	Strong Capital Management	Securities & Investment	\$27,600
Greenberg, Ira & Lorraine	Promotions Unlimited	Manufacturing & Distributing	\$20,000
Kohler, Mary Stewart & Terry J	Windway Capital	Steel Mining/Processing	\$19,000
Jones, Donald G	Star Cablevision	Cable TV	\$11,750
Burkhardt, Edward A	WI Central Railroad	Railroads	\$10,725
Minihan, William	Building Committee INC	General Contractors	\$10,150
Dalton, Pauline A	Fiserv INC	Commercial Banks	\$10,000
Oyler, Robert L	Employers Group	Business Services	\$10,000
Thakur, Jangbir	N/A	Oil & Gas	\$10,000
Hendricks, Kenneth A	ABC Supply	Building Materials & Equipment	\$10,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$39,000</b>

Contributions from the top 10 individuals accounted for 1.4 percent of the total contributed. The average given by these individuals was \$13,922. Contributions from the top 10 PACs accounted for 4 percent of the total.

<b>Top 10 PAC Contributors</b>	<b>Contributions</b>
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Wisconsin Education Association PAC	\$67,889
Wisconsin Realtor PAC	\$66,180
Wisconsin Builders PAC	\$59,400
Wisconsin Bankers PAC	\$40,527
NW Mutual Life Insurance PAC	\$36,550
Waste Management PAC	\$36,150
Tavern Industry PAC	\$35,170
Wisconsin Physician PAC	\$30,700
Firststar Corp Civic Affairs PAC	\$28,100
WI Truck Operators PAC	\$27,870

## WHO GETS

### The most expensive races

The race for governor, for which \$3.5 million was raised, was the most expensive race in the Wisconsin 1998 elections. Most (85 percent) of the money for that race was raised by Gov. Tommy Thompson. For comparison, candidates for the three other statewide races raised just more than \$500,000 combined.

The most expensive legislative race was for the open seat in Senate District 27. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, this was a highly prized seat because the party capturing this seat was likely going to capture control of the Senate. This was, in fact, the case. Democrat Jon Erpenbach won, and the Democrats gained control of the Senate.

The most expensive House race was for District 67. Winning incumbent Tom Sykora far outspent his Democratic challenger, Mark Weinhold. Sykora raised \$135,210 (more than \$100,000 of that came from his own pockets) compared to Weinhold's \$14,448.

### Top fund-raising candidates

Not surprisingly, incumbent Republican gubernatorial candidate Tommy Thompson raised the most money in 1998, with \$3.1 million combined. Successful Democratic attorney general candidate Jim Doyle, raised the second most in contributions, with \$425,450

Nancy Mistele, who lost her bid for the highly prized open seat in Senate District 27, raised the most of any legislative candidate, \$261,535. Not far behind her was Bill Sodemann, who lost in an open race for Senate District 15. The most successful fund-raiser in the Assembly was Republican Scott Jensen, an incumbent who won his re-election bid. Jensen raised \$149,096.

### **ABOUT OUR INFORMATION**

The National Institute on Money in State Politics received electronic data from the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, which in turn received data from the Elections Division of the state of Wisconsin.

Candidates who raised money but did not actually run in the 1998 election cycle received a total of \$48,783. That money has been excluded from the analysis.