

Lobby Units Have Raised \$14.2 Million

By William Claiborne
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Special interest groups already have on hand \$14.2 million in cash ready to contribute to candidates in the 1974 congressional elections, the citizens lobby Common Cause reported yesterday.

That is slightly more than the lobbying groups donated to congressional candidates in the 1972 elections, and the current level is expected to rise even more.

"Anyone who thinks that the Watergate scandals have put special interest groups out of business had better take a close look at these figures," said Fred Wertheimer, director of the Common Cause campaign monitoring project.

The Common Cause study shows that funds available to some lobbying groups for contributing to campaigns has increased dramatically at a time when major special interest legislation is about to come up for congressional review.

For example, health groups gave \$1 million to congressional candidates in 1972, but \$1.5 million is already available for the upcoming campaign, including \$889,000 held by the American Medical As-

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sociation and its affiliates. The health care issue is already heating up on Capitol Hill, and is likely to come to a head with a bill early next year.

Common Cause figures, based on federal reports filed by registered lobby groups and congressional-level partisan committees on March 10, show the biggest potential special interest contributors are business and professional groups, with \$5.9 million on hand, and labor groups, with \$5 million.

In 1972, business and professional groups gave \$3.4 million directly to congressional candidates, while labor unions donated \$3.6 million.

This year, the National Association of Manufacturers' political arm, called BIPAC, leads the business lobbying groups, with \$230,000 available

for candidates. Of labor's \$5 million, \$1 million is held by maritime unions and \$717,000 by the United Auto Workers.

As previously disclosed, dairy groups have \$2 million on hand, most of it held by three major milk producing industry committee that gave more than \$1 million in the 1972 congressional races and \$427,500 to President Nixon's re-election campaign.

Securities industry committees, which gave \$54,775 to congressional candidates in 1972, now have \$159,660 on hand, according to Common Cause. Railroad groups have increased their treasuries from \$76,000 in 1972 to \$287,000.

Under questioning, Wertheimer acknowledged that the cash on hand reported by some special interest groups, as of Feb. 28, would include

normal operating expenses and that all of the money listed would not be available for candidates.

But later, a Common Cause official pointed out that the normal operating costs of many political branches of lobbying groups are picked up by the parent groups. He also noted that some large lobbying groups can greatly increase the campaign budget anytime after the deadline for filing cash-on-hand statements.

Moreover, Common Cause stressed that its figures do not include money given indirectly through intermediary individuals or committees. The oil industry, for example, is a major investor in political campaigns, but only one political companies registered and reported congressional contributions in 1972, listing \$37,000.

Common Cause also re-

ported that congressional level Republican committees now have four times as much cash as Democratic ones, \$2.1 million to \$500,000. The Republican National Committee and affiliates have \$3.4 million, while the Democrats have \$307,000.

Not included in these totals are proceeds from the parties' traditional fund-raising dinners, held by the Democrats on March 21 and the Republicans on Wednesday night. Each grossed about \$700,000.

Change Held Needed

John Gardner, Common Cause founder and chairman, said the figures show that "we need a new" (system). He accused the House leadership of failing to support any form of public financing of elections and said campaign reform is "the only opportunity the 93d Congress will have to provide a

legislative response to the historic Watergate scandals."

A bill that would enable taxpayers to earmark \$1 of their federal income taxes to help pay for congressional elections is bogged down in the House Administration Committee, and Mr. Nixon has threatened to veto it anyway. A similar public financing system for presidential elections went into effect last year.

According to the three-volume Common Cause breakdown of special interest giving, the leading recipient of money from business and professional groups in 1972 was Sen. Howard Baker (R-Tenn.), who received \$53,800. Baker has vigorously opposed public financing of congressional campaigns.

The top recipient of all forms of special interest gifts



JOHN GARDNER

... 'need new system'

in 1972 was Frank Kelley, the Democratic nominee who lost to Senate Minority Whip Robert P. Griffin in the Michigan race. Kelley received \$104,589 from labor groups. The highest labor contribution in a House race went to Democrat William Anderson, who failed in a re-election attempt in Tennessee. He received \$38,657 from labor organizations.