

# Lobbies Amass \$17.4 Million For '74 Races

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Special interest groups already have raised \$17.4 million for the 1974 congressional elections, or nearly twice the amount they reported giving House and Senate candidates in 1972, according to a study released yesterday by Common Cause.

Of the total, \$14.7 million is being held in special interest committee treasuries and \$2.7 million already has been donated to candidates. Common Cause predicts several million more will be raised before election day.

With national health legislation pending in both houses of Congress, health lobbies showed the most dramatic increase in campaign funds over 1972, with a combined war chest of \$2.9 million. The American Medical Association Political Action Committee and its affiliates, which reported spending about \$844,000 on congressional campaigns two years ago, already have collected more than \$1.8 million this year.

Despite negative Watergate-related publicity, the three major dairy political committees, TAPE, ADEPT, and SPACE, have collected over \$2 million—also about twice the amount they reported spending on congressional races in 1972.

In all, business and professional groups have about \$8 million in ready campaign money; labor fund raising committees have \$5.4 million. Another \$4.3 million has been collected by the congressional campaign committees of the Republican and Democratic parties.

At a press conference yesterday, Common Cause Chairman John W. Gardner pointed to the figures as evidence of the need for public campaign

financing. "Unless Congress acts to provide for new clean sources of campaign funds," Gardner said, "our present campaign financing system with all its corrupting consequences is going to thrive and prosper."

The campaign reform bill that the Senate passed April 11 provides federal matching funds for small contributions in presidential, House and Senate elections.

A counterpart measure expected to be reported by the House Administration Committee next week provides public financing for presidential elections, but essentially continues the present system for House and Senate races.

Common Cause has been lobbying for two key amendments to the House bill: to establish an independent elections commission and extend public financing on a matching system to congressional elections.

The bill is expected to reach the House floor about Aug. 1.

Gardner criticized the House Democratic leadership for "hiding under the desk" while House Administration Committee Chairman Wayne L. Hays (D-Ohio) has moved the bill at an unhurried pace. Gardner added that "Common Cause will do everything possible to make this [campaign finance] the key campaign issue this fall."

Common Cause's legislative director, Fred Wertheimer, said that although the mixed public-private financing proposal would not eliminate special interest fund raising committees, it would "gradually move you away from reliance on special interest money" by limiting individual contributions and providing alterna-

tive sources of funds.

Wertheimer also noted that "Republican congressional committees do not appear to have suffered at all from Watergate." As of May 31, the six GOP congressional committees had \$3.5 million

on hand, compared to \$3.3 million that they spent in the 1972 election.

Democratic campaign committees, in contrast, had raised only \$900,000, or about one-third the amount they spent in 1972. Liberal fund-raising groups such as the Democratic Study Group campaign fund and the National Committee for an Effective Congress also reported sharp drops in their contributions. NCEC, which distributed nearly \$400,000 to congressional candidates two years ago, had raised only about \$48,000 as of May 31.

However, trade union committees with nearly \$1 million 59 per cent more than they spent in the 1972 congressional elections. The tiny Marine Engineers union, which has a heavy stake in maritime legislation, led the labor committees with nearly \$1 million in its coffers.

Business political committees have nearly doubled their 1972 totals, with \$2.8 million on hand, and \$670,000 already spent. The National Education Association has on hand \$642,000—more than 10 times what it spent in 1972 congressional campaigns.

Two of the best known interest groups, however, report contributions substantially below the 1972 levels. The National Association of Manufacturers' Political Action Committee (BIPAC) and the AFL-CIO's Committee on Political Education (COPE) are several hundred thousand dollars below their 1972 totals.

Both are expected to raise funds at an increasing rate, as the year goes on. "The big bulk of our contributions come later in the year," an AFL-CIO spokesman said.

The Common Cause study also pointed to "a surprisingly large portion" of special interest money supplied from California. Affiliates in that state provided nearly two-thirds of the NEA's campaign funds, and almost half of realtors' and the dentists'.

The study is based on a comprehensive analysis of the quarterly campaign finance re-

ports that candidates and fund-raising committees must file with the clerk of the House and the secretary of the Senate.

The reports list how much money the political committee has received and spent during the three-month period, the identities of donors of more than \$100, and the names of candidates who received contributions.

The reports are available on microfilm or the House clerk's office for inspection by the public. Common Cause, however, buys copies of the microfilm that it copies and files. According to John J. Conway, director of the project, Common Cause will receive and computerize copies of about 300,000 campaign finance reports this year.

In addition, Conway said, Common Cause is coding each committee according to the economic interest it represents and computerizing that information.

"We've also assigned large individual contributors economic interest codes," he said. "We can ask the computer to give us all the dairy money, or all the contributions to members of the Ways and Means Committee."

The study released yesterday was derived from second quarter campaign finance reports, filed by June 10. They indicated that since March 10, special interest groups had increased their cash on hand by \$2.3 million.

Under existing law, there is no limit on the campaign contributions special interest groups can make.