

# Gift List By AMA Revealed

## 'Medicredit' Sponsors Got Large Share

By Morton Mintz

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Political arms of the American Medical Association and its state affiliates have made campaign contributions to almost half of the 435 members of the House of Representatives since the 1972 elections.

The 205 recipients include 108 of the 162 House sponsors of Medicredit, the AMA's proposal for national health insurance.

The American Medical Political Action Committee (AMPAC) and its affiliates in the states also have contributed at least \$100 each to dozens of non-incumbent candidates for the House in this year's elections, including many who are seeking seats that are becoming vacant through retirement or the incumbents' seeking other office.

In addition, the AMPAC units contributed to 21 senators, of whom seven are Medicredit sponsors, as well as to several non-incumbent Senate candidates.

The grand total given or earmarked up to Sept. 1 exceeds \$600,000.

Medicredit is pending in the House Ways and Means Committee, which has before it several other health insurance bills opposed by the AMA.

Of the 21 committee members who are seeking re-election, 10 have received a total of \$25,000 from the AMPAC units in the period June 1 through Aug. 31, according to reports filed with the Clerk of the House and the Secretary of the Senate under the 1971

campaign financing disclosure law.

Of the 10 seeking re-election, six are Medicredit sponsors. The six include two Democrats who are unopposed in the Nov. 5 general elections. They are Reps. Richard Fulton (Tenn.), \$2,500, who introduced the bill for the AMA on Jan. 18, and who won an easy primary victory, and Omar Birluson (Tex.), \$4,000, who was unopposed in the primary.

The Fulton contribution, made in July by AMPAC's Tennessee affiliate, was the largest single gift to his re-election drive, the Associated Press said. Birluson's report, the AP said, showed that the \$4,000 he got from the Texas affiliate amounted to 62.5 percent of his listed expenditures so far in 1974.

In the House, the top recipient was Rep. David Towell of Nevada, a first-term Republican listed for \$15,300. In the Senate, the leader was retiring Sen. Edward J. Gurney (R-Fla.), \$10,100.

The newest batch of reports—received from all but a few of the 50 AMPAC units for the three-month period ended Aug. 31—came as members of a House-Senate conference committee prepared to meet this week in an effort to rec-

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oncile bills to tighten the election financing law.

The House and Senate bills both would provide public financing for presidential elections. But the Senate favors such funding also for House and Senate elections, while the House strongly opposes it.

The big wave of contributions is expected to come in the seven weeks remaining before the Nov. 5 elections. The treasuries of the AMPAC units are brimming over, with combined cash on hand and Treasury bills as of May 31 of \$1.8 million—more than any other special interest political group.

The runner-up, with \$1.6 million, was TAPE, the political arm of Associated Milk Producers Inc. Together with the two major counterparts of TAPE, the political committees of the three leading dairymen's cooperatives had combined cash on hand as of May 31 of \$2,183,783.

An earlier Washington Post survey showed that since election day in 1972, the milk

funds had contributed about \$222,500 to 85 legislators, or approximately 1 out of about 7 of the total of 535 senators and representatives.

The money was concentrated in members of the House and Senate Agriculture Subcommittees with responsibility for dairy prices. Many of the recipients also got substantial contributions from other special interests, including AMPAC and others concerned with health legislation.

Medicredit, the AMA proposal, essentially would continue physician domination of the health care system, while making it easier—through a system of tax credits—for Americans to pay their medical bills.

Other proposals, including the administration's, would impose controls on physician costs and on the quality of medical care.

An AMA spokesman, in a telephone interview, said decisions as to which candidates are to be supported are made at the local level. The usual practice is for a local delegation of physicians to offer money and sometimes volunteer help to candidates they

choose to support, and to seek additional funds if necessary from the national AMPAC.

The spokesman said that about \$3 is contributed at the local and state levels to each \$1 by AMPAC. He said that AMPAC has more members than any other physician group but the AMA, although the number—reportedly at an all-time high—is not disclosed.

The spokesman said that no taint of impropriety has ever been associated with AMPAC. The organization has been "scrupulously honest" and has "leaned over absolutely backward" to comply with all applicable federal and state laws, he said.

The data for the most recent three-month reporting period supplemented information in filings dating back to Nov. 7, 1972, that were reviewed by Washington Post researcher Patricia Davis.

Some highlights that emerged from The Washington Post's survey of contributions by AMPAC and its state affiliates:

- House recipients included 120 Republicans, who got substantially more than twice the sum given to 85 Democrats.

• Senate recipients included 12 Democrats, who got a total of \$23,500, and 10 Republicans, \$38,800.

• Unlike the dairy committees, which contributed large sums immediately after the 1972 elections—often to candidates who had not been expected to win, and who had been given small amounts, the AMPAC units made few sizable contributions until November, 1973.

• The pace of giving was relatively high in August—when President Ford, immediately after taking office, made a plea to Congress for enactment of health insurance this year—but not substantially different from the July level.

In addition to those mentioned, the AMPAC units list contributions exceeding \$5,000 each for the following:

#### House Republicans

Donald Young (Alaska), \$10,100; Robert Mathias (Calif.), \$10,100; Victor E. Vevsey (Calif.), \$10,100; James G. Martin (N.C.), \$10,000.

Also, William H. Hudnut III (Ind.), \$8,500; Ben B. Blackburn (Ga.), \$8,150; Minority

Leader John J. Rhodes (Ariz.), \$7,600; Robert J. Huber (Mich.) and Garry Brown (Mich.), \$7,000 each; Robert B. Bauman (Md.), \$7,050; LaMar Baker (Tenn.), \$7,000; Samuel L. Devine (Ohio), \$7,100.

Also, John B. Conlan (Ariz.), \$6,800; William J. Scherle (Iowa), \$6,000; Gene Taylor (Mo.), \$5,500; Robert Lagomarsino (Calif.), \$5,400; Stanford E. Parris (Va.), \$5,300; Samuel Young (Ill.), \$5,250; Robert T. Price (Tex.), \$5,100; Joel T. Broyhill (Va.), \$5,100; Dan Kuykendall (Tenn.), \$5,200.

#### House Democrats

Charles H. Wilson (Calif.), \$5,600.

#### Senate Republicans

Henry Bellmon (Okla.), \$9,500; Barry Goldwater (Ariz.), \$6,500; Milton Young (N.D.), \$5,900; Robert Packwood (Ore.), \$5,637.

#### Senate Democrats

None.

Numerous contributions totaling an even \$5,000, in addition, were made to House and Senate incumbents of both parties, as well as to non-incumbent candidates. Several of the non-incumbents got more than \$5,000.