

2016 Lobbying

I wish I could say that the lobbying this election season is outside of the ordinary by being extraordinarily high, but every year since the Citizens United ruling in 2009 lobbying has increased with Hilary Clinton and her Clinton Foundation at the forefront.ⁱ Whether or not the Citizens United ruling was constitutional and fair is beside the point; instead we will examine what industries and people are contributing the most money to the Senate, House of Representatives, the Presidency between Clinton and Trump, and what sort of ‘favors’ are granted to those contributors after the elected person is in office. Some of these statistics may shock you; 86% of undergraduates at UC San Diego did not know how much money was being contributed to the political system this yearⁱⁱ - do you?

So what is lobbying? To lobby the government is “the act of attempting to influence decisions in one’s favor”ⁱⁱⁱ and is done so in the United States by the private sector, corporations, and individuals. Gifts for Congress are very problematic because anything of great value must be legally claimed.^{iv} Instead lobbying groups take the Congressperson they wish to sway to expensive lunches and dinners, and lavish phony awards ceremonies around the world (because ‘award ceremonies are tax exempt) that the Congressperson may take his or her family on. To prove the effectiveness of lobbying Congress *The Economist* and *The Washington Post* compared the Top 50 firms that spent the

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most money on lobbying and compared this using linear regression to their respective S&P 500 performance in 2015 – “the study concluded that spending on lobbying was a "spectacular investment" yielding "blistering" returns comparable to a high-flying hedge fund, even despite the financial downturn of the past few years.”^v Additionally, 78% of the House of Representative and 87% of the Senate work for private lobby firms after their respective term limits in government.^{vi} Why does the American public not look into this and possibly prevent somehow government officials from changing laws for large-scale corporations?

It is quite upsetting that the mainstream media does not divulge who the largest lobbying companies are; instead it takes individuals seeking the specific information on the internet, rather than having it thrown in front of them on the evening news. Just to mention a few of the top lobbyists in the 2016 election cycles are the Pharmaceutical Research & Manufacturers of America (an association of all mainstream pharmaceutical companies like J&J, Eli Lilly, etc.) donated more than \$11M^{vii} and Hilary Clinton pledged, in a leaked speech by Wikileaks, that as President she will stand against marijuana legalization ‘in all senses of the word.’^{viii}

With corporations and specific private sectors interests being mentioned, let’s not forget individuals, which for some reason feel their right

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to sway their beliefs of how humans should act upon each of the citizens of the United States. Charles and David Koch, also known as the 'Koch Brothers' own the largest privately held company in the United States.^{ix} Privately held companies are not required to disclose '10-K as reported to the IRS' and make their respective political contributions more private, which is why it is difficult to trace the Koch Brothers back to specific campaigns, knowing the entire time that they were contributors. The Walton family, owners of the Wal-Mart fortune of which all three children are Billionaires, dodge a large amount of taxes in Arkansas^x through a combination of legal loop holes and lobbying, putting these heirs in a much lower tax bracket.^{xi} Laws like these have to be re-written and if President Obama is completely unable to change them, Hilary Clinton will not when she is paid \$250k for a speech to Goldman Sachs and told the investment bankers in leaked speech transcripts that she will keep the 'carried interest loophole' and her 'dream for America is open borders.'^{xii}

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Founder

Brett Blazys, MBA

Brett is the founder, motivator and visionary behind *Econ Evidence*. He started his consulting career as a peer-to-peer consultant and his outstanding, global success within the biotech area launched him into corporate consulting. Prior to starting *Econ Evidence*, Brett was a Senior Portfolio Analyst & Operations Consultant for a Fortune 500 Clinical Research Organization and later received his MBA from the Rady School of Management. With years of international clinical consulting experience, in various countries across Europe and Asia, performing complex financial planning and optimization, he is the ideal leader for *Econ Evidence*. Contact Us today for Brett Blazys' CV.

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ⁱ <https://www.opensecrets.org/industries/indus.php?ind=K02>

ⁱⁱ Study Completed by Brett Blazys – Contact Us for Info

ⁱⁱⁱ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lobbying#United_States

^{iv} https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lobbying_in_the_United_States

^v https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lobbying_in_the_United_States

^{vi} <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/01/15/which-members-of-congress-become-lobbyists-the-ones-with-the-most-power-heres-the-data/>

^{vii} <https://www.opensecrets.org/lobby/top.php?showYear=2016&indexType=s>

^{viii} <http://thefreethoughtproject.com/leaked-wall-st-speech-shows-clinton-opposing-pot-legalization-in-all-senses-of-the-word/>

^{ix} https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_activities_of_the_Koch_brothers

^x <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2013-09-12/how-wal-mart-s-waltons-maintain-their-billionaire-fortune-taxes>

^{xi} <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2013-09-12/how-wal-mart-s-waltons-maintain-their-billionaire-fortune-taxes>

^{xii} <http://www.vox.com/2016/10/7/13206882/hillary-clinton-wikileaks-speeches-goldman>