
The prospering business of lobbying and interest groups under the Trump presidency

Austin HodgkissMr. ShiffletUS Government1/19/2018.

Throughout the first year of the Trump presidency, interest groups have seemingly flourished despite the Presidents claims to “drain the swamp” and reduce the amount of influence held by lobbyists and special interest groups. With record amounts of money being spent in 2017 estimated to be 3.15 billion dollars which is second only to 2009 at 3.5 billion, with no planned legislation to impact or limit the reach of interest groups. During the first year of the Trump lobbyists and interest groups have had free reign to impact congress, through the lack of any plans to limit interest group impact, Trump's administration being comprised of previous lobbyists, and its conflict of interest on the amount of money contributed to the Trump campaign.

Throughout 2017 congress has made no attempt to push any laws or bills to limit the contributions or impact on the legislation. With interest group spending at a soaring high the outlook for interest groups is good, despite the few executive orders issued at the beginning of the Presidency the biggest spenders are hardly affected. The Pharmaceuticals interest groups lead the way in early January through June, with 145 million dollars, one large interest group for the industry, Pharmaceutical research and manufacturers of America or PhRMA spent 14.2 million in the first 6 months of 2017, which is 3/4ths of what it spent in total of 2016. Logs reveal how much money interest groups spent to get inside the West Wing, Budget chief Mick Mulvaney's former congressional Chief of Staff Al Simpson was hired by the lobbying firm Mercury in February, soon after Trump appointed Mulvaney to run the management and budget office. Since then, Mulvaney and Simpson met on a multitude of occasions, as the lobbyist brought his clients to Mulvaney. Those clients, including powerhouse corporations, paying Simpson's lobbying firm \$360,000 throughout 2017. As well as the owners of NFL teams such as the Jaguars, Rams, Texans and the Redskins, who all donated 1 million dollar checks to the Trump campaign. This shows the unrestricted access these interest groups have, to have direct connections into the upper staff in the white house.

Interest groups can be attributed to Trump's astounding amount of money spent on his campaign at 107 million dollars in donations. Among the top donors included major business leaders and corporations, including several that have business dealings with the united states government. These companies are in sharp contrast to the obama era interest groups that meet were typically consumer rights, and philanthropic representatives. Continuing the difference

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between the two administrations Obama openly released the logs, in contrast to Trump's legal battle to keep them closed. Although Trump's continued claims to “drain the swamp” and reduce the impact of these interest groups, is prospering even in the white house American Bridge researchers found former lobbyists now working at agencies they lobbied at some point in their careers, with from 15 in the executive office of the president to one or two at departments, such as Labor and Treasury.

White House and Trump administration says the former lobbyists and other industry officials joining the government are avoiding conflicts of interest by shedding themselves of financial ties to their former employers and agreeing to recuse themselves from working on the specific issues they handled in their old jobs. With this assurance the White House and the Trump administration attempt to resolve any conflicts of interest. However this does little to limit the reach of the interest groups, with over 100 former lobbyists within the White House, and limit the ties they have considering, the 100 million dollars in donations going towards Trump's campaign. The sheer amount of money donated to Trump via special interest groups, despite his claims to reduce the impact and ability of those groups, raises questions on Trump's real drive or willingness to impact the companies.

Although the Trump administrations has made those it's hired of former interest groups renounce and sever its ties with its previous company or corporation, does little to stop the prospering business from creating heavy ties in the White House. With no legislation planned to limit the effectiveness of these interest groups, and the amount of money spent in 2017 indicate that, the business of lobbying is at an all time high. During Trump's first year, the amount spent by interest groups is the second highest on record at 3.5 million dollars projected, and the potential conflict of interest between the amount of interest groups, that invested into the record breaking 106 million dollar.

Trump campaign and that are now employed at the white house, it seems that instead of a draining of the swamp, it's overflowing.

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