

Campaign Finance Donations

May 2026

Money is the root of all politics. And you, my friends, are its source.

There are few politicians who don't need more money for their campaigns (we'll tell you later about state "clean candidates" who are the exception). And, if you have donated to a political campaign, there's a good chance you are on "the list" and are being inundated with texts and emails from candidates across the nation asking you to give them money.

This is a critical election year. And as we enter the final six months before the November election, Republicans have a \$600 million advantage in donations, thanks largely to dark money accounts. If you are able, we encourage you to donate to campaigns to support the efforts to bring sanity back to our nation.

But where should your donations go? (Remember that under the law, campaign contributions are public, so for any donation to a candidate your name must be listed in campaign reports.)

The Pebble Creek Democratic Club believes it is up to every individual to determine how much they are interested in giving, and to whom.

Our intent here is to outline some of our thoughts on how to make that decision in hopes it will help. We approach the decision from two points: interest and impact.

IMPACT (IN GENERAL)

A contribution of \$100 to a campaign with only \$1,000 in the bank is going to have a much greater impact than the same contribution to a campaign with \$10 million the bank. That's not to say you should not contribute to the bigger campaign. It may be the best spot to invest in your interests. And every dollar to every campaign, regardless of size, is meaningful. Any campaign or interest website here provides links for you to donate directly.

TRACKING FEDERAL DONATIONS

If you are wondering how any federal candidate, across the nation, is doing in fundraising, you can check out their reports at the [Federal Election Commission](#). That data does not include outside, or dark, money which is spent on behalf of candidates but not through their campaign. That amount can dwarf candidate spending, depending on the race.

INTERESTS

As you begin thinking about donating to political efforts, consider what you are most interested in or what you care about the most. For many, that is local politics, from the City of Goodyear, to local schools, Maricopa County government and statewide politics. For others, the primary interest is national politics and issues.

NATIONAL Issues or NATIONAL Campaigns

Is your interest driven by a specific issue (election protection or women's rights or immigration or gay rights, for instance)? If so, you consider donating to organizations that are fighting the demolition of those rights by the Trump Administration. To review some of these organizations, here are links to the national organizations and to their local (if appropriate) chapters.

- To support the fights to protect our rights, two national groups with statewide chapters deeply involved in many of the legal battles against the Administration are
 - the [ACLU](#) (American Civil Liberties Union) ([Arizona Affiliate](#)) and
 - [Common Cause](#) ([Arizona Chapter](#)).
- To focus on protecting the right to vote, the [League of Women Voters](#) has five [local Leagues](#). This links to our closest one.
- If reproductive rights/health care for women (and all others) is a critical issue for you, consider [Planned Parenthood Federation of America](#) as a target for your donation. The link is to their national organization because there are health centers and other patient assistance information throughout their main site. Their Arizona site is linked [here](#). They get involved in the statewide initiatives as well.
- For racial justice, you might look at the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#).
- If it's gay rights, maybe donate to the [Human Rights Campaign](#).

These are just examples; there are many fine organizations involved in these efforts. Search by topic if your interest is not listed here.

To support electing Democrats in Congress:

- You could donate to the [Democratic National Committee](#),
- or to the Democratic campaign committees for the [Senate](#) and [House](#).

However, once you do, you have no voice in how those dollars are distributed.

- An option might be to give to individual candidate campaigns. With all 435 U.S. House seats and 33 Senate seats up for election, it's sometimes difficult to determine where your money might do the most good. One way is to look at races

that are close enough that either side believes they are winnable. At this time, there are four **Senate** seats ripe for takeover by Democratic candidates, which would flip Senate control blue. The best chances to flip a seat are in North Carolina, Maine, Ohio and Alaska. We also need to hold on to the seat in Michigan because Republicans believe they can flip it. We have opportunities in the senatorial races in Iowa, Texas and Nebraska. (Remember that neither of our Senators are up for re-election this year. While we support both, our advice is to focus on candidates who will be on the ballot in November.)

- On the **House** side, there are 44 races targeted as “in play” for possible Democratic takeover. Three of those are in Arizona: CD01, CD02 and CD06, all three of which are currently held by Republicans. As you can see, our local race for Congressional District 9, with Democratic challenger Dani Sterbinsky, is not among the ones receiving national attention, or national money.

LOCAL and STATEWIDE Campaigns

For Arizona campaigns, the law limits the amount any individual can donate to a single candidate. The limit is \$5,500 for any state or legislative candidate (who is not running “clean”) and \$6,750 for any local candidate (like for county, city or a district campaign).

- Consider starting with our Goodyear City Council races which are nonpartisan. We have four candidates running for three seats. These candidates are often at our meetings and are available to meet and talk with you. The mayor is also up for re-election and currently running unopposed. These campaigns impact us and have the smallest “war chests”, usually around \$5,000 to \$10,000 for total contributions. To find out how much they have in the bank, and to see who donated (an interesting exercise to determine who is backing them), go to the city [website](#), and look under campaign contributions in the city clerk section.
- If you are interested in climate change, utility/solar/wind issues, and the cost we pay for utilities, then you might want to spend your dollars with the [Arizona Corporation Commission](#) candidates [Jonathon Hill](#) and [Clara Pratte](#).
- Both the Arizona Senate and the Arizona House are ripe for flipping to Democratic control (something not done in the state House since 1964). This, of course, is where legislation is created that impacts all of us in the state. Our local, Legislation District 29 candidates are [Eric Stafford](#) for Senate and [Christine Scianna](#) for House.
 - Both are running “clean”. That means there is a cap on what they can receive prior to the July 21 primary election, and no additional contributions after that. In exchange, they will each receive \$23,099 to spend for the primary and \$34,649 to spend for the general election. Prior to the primary, they may also

receive up to \$5,775 in “early contributions.” The max any individual can contribute is \$220. Check with the individual campaigns to find out if they have reached that cap.

- Very critical for us, and for the future of Arizona, is to retain the “Big 3 Democrats”: Governor [Katie Hobbs](#), Secretary of State [Adrian Fontes](#) and Attorney General [Kris Mayes](#). All three face a massive influx of money to their Trump-endorsed opponents. These links are to their campaign and donation sites. For more information on their work over the past four years, check out their official Arizona government sites.
- In addition to the campaigns for Corporation Commission and Arizona’s “Big 3” executive offices, the campaign where your donation might have the most impact is Congressional District 9. Because national politicians believe this is a “safe Republican” seat, very little outside money is coming into [Dani Sterbinksy](#)’s campaign, as noted above.
- The [Arizona Democratic Party](#) and [Maricopa County Democratic Party](#) also solicit donations to help candidates in our state. Much of that money goes to pay for the infrastructure (from coordinating volunteers to printing campaign material to paying for social media) to support those candidates.

INITIATIVES

- Others who might be soliciting money with a local impact are folks who are promoting ballot initiatives. One of the biggest is an effort to put a lid on school vouchers, called [Protect Education](#), run by [Save Our Schools](#). Another involved local umbrella group in Arizona is [Civic Engagement Beyond Voting](#). Both are very hands-on groups and look for volunteers and organizers as well as funding.

ACT BLUE

A quick aside to note that most Democratic candidates receive their money through Act Blue. It’s a clearinghouse for Democratic candidates only, taking in donations and sending them directly to the proper candidate, and also taking care of required paperwork for the candidate. Act Blue takes 3.95% of all donations to cover credit card fees and technology costs.

Money, as well as our time as campaign volunteers, is the key to victory in November. We hope you will all contribute whatever is reasonable for you, both in time and dollars.