



Big Money Bulletin

Inside

Page 2

Puttin' the fight in Fighting Bob Fest
Pimping the state budget

Page 3

Health care reform enemies give big
Supreme Court race shatters record
Changing the world in your backyard
\$17M spent on lobbying

Page 4

A new sheriff takes over

Get Big Money



Out of Politics!

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The People's Legislature

STORM FOR REFORM

Tuesday, September 18

Noon

State Capitol

The People's Legislature will be storming the State Capitol to rally for campaign finance reform. Join us at the State Street entrance to the west wing of the Capitol. Bring a friend or two . . . or 10!

- ✓ Storms are noisy. Bring a pot or pan to bang.
- ✓ Everyone takes a turn at the microphone. Come prepared to say – in 15 words or less – what the bosses at the Capitol most need to hear.

Governor Doyle has promised to call the Legislature into special session to act on campaign reform. Let's hold him to his promise and put pressure on legislators to act.

Sign up for the storm. And spread the word.

Pre-register at www.wisdc.org

For more information, call 608-255-4260 (or toll-free 888-455-4260) or e-mail us at wisdc@wisdc.org

Cindy Sheehan to headline 6th annual Fighting Bob Fest Sept. 8

Nationally known anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan will be among a dozen speakers who will take part in the sixth annual Fighting Bob Fest, the state's largest political gathering, on Saturday, September 8 at the Sauk County Fairgrounds in Baraboo.

Democracy Campaign director Mike McCabe also will be among the featured speakers and breakout session leaders.

Fighting Bob Fest is aimed at keeping alive the progressive political tradition of Robert M. "Fighting Bob" La Follette, Wisconsin's most famous political figure. Last year's Bob Fest drew more than 6,000 people to the daylong fair of political speeches, music, food and networking.

Other scheduled speakers at this year's event include 7th District Congressman David Obey, the powerful chairman of the U.S. House Appropriations Committee; 97-year-old campaign finance reform activist Doris "Granny D" Haddock; Texas populist author and commentator Jim Hightower; RadioNation host Laura Flanders; journalist John Nichols; U.S. Representatives Tammy Baldwin and Gwen Moore; Lieutenant Governor Barbara Lawton; and state Senator Lena Taylor. FightingBob.com editor and publisher Ed Garvey will emcee the event.

Bob Fest will get under way at 8:30 a.m. and will go until about 5:30 p.m. Six breakout sessions focusing on major issues facing the country and the state will take place over the noon hour. They include campaign finance reform, women in the workplace, the crisis in education, peace, global warming, and agriculture and democracy.

Admission to the event is free, but donations to help offset travel costs for speakers, fairground rentals and other charges will be accepted. Those planning to attend can pre-register for the event online by going to www.FightingBob.com.

Lawmakers use state budget as campaign fundraising tool

Wisconsin legislators and Democratic Governor Jim Doyle raised more than \$2 million in campaign contributions during the first six months of 2007 by tapping special interests at extravagant golf outings and other fundraisers while spending and policy decisions were being made for the proposed 2007-09 state budget, according to a Democracy Campaign analysis released in mid-August.

Between January and the end of June, legislators raised \$1.52 million – more than they raised in past, comparable periods when a state budget was under consideration. The total, which includes personal

Money flowed to power as leadership-run campaign committees received nearly a third of all the money raised. Democrats who control the Senate raised the most, followed by Republicans who control the state Assembly.

campaign committees and four leadership committees, is 12% more than the \$1.36 million raised in the first six months of 2005 and a 19% increase over the \$1.28 million raised in the first half of 2003.

Doyle, who raised and spent a record \$10.6 million to win reelection last November, reeled in \$527,684 during the first six months of 2007, just short of the \$562,954 he snapped up in the first six months of 2003 after winning the governor's office in 2002.

Money flowed to power as the four campaign committees used by legislative leaders to raise money to help their colleagues at election time raised \$485,201, or 32%, of the \$1.52 million raised by legislators. Senate Democrats, who captured an 18-15 majority over Republicans in last November's elections, raised the most money – \$451,311 – during the first half of 2007. They were followed by Assembly Republicans, who hold a 52-47 majority in the lower house and raised \$419,825.

Bipartisan legislation backed by WDC banning fundraising during the budget process has been introduced as **Assembly Bill 61** and **Senate Bill 25**.

Get the lowdown on the higher-ups.

Read the Big Money Blog.

www.wisdc.org/blog/bigmoneyblog.html

Health care reform opponents shower money on state officials

Republicans who control the state Assembly have gotten nearly two-thirds of their campaign contributions from special interests that oppose health care reform legislation. And Democratic Governor Jim Doyle, who has responded coolly to the Senate-approved Healthy Wisconsin plan – saying “I live in the real world” – has received almost half of his campaign money from opponents of health care reform.

The Assembly GOP, which removed the Senate health care plan from its version of the budget, accepted \$4.4 million from 1999-2006 from special interests that oppose universal health care. Assembly Republicans raised a total \$6.9 million from all special interests during the period.

Doyle got \$7.3 million of his total \$15.2 million in contributions, or 48%, from special interests that oppose the plan. The budget proposal Doyle gave to the Legislature contained an expansion of the state’s BadgerCare health program to cover more low-income residents.

Opponents of the universal health care plan in the Senate Democrats’ proposed budget have given far more than supporters of the plan, contributing \$18.08 million to current legislators and the governor from 1999 through 2006 – over seven times more than the \$2.5 million in contributions from supporters of the plan. The opponents’ contributions represent 53% of the total \$20.23 million in special interest contributions current legislators have accepted in the last four, two-year election cycles. Supporters’ contributions represent 8% of the total.

Supreme Court race sets record

Candidates and special interest groups that ran their own campaigns to influence the outcome of this April’s state Supreme Court election combined to spend more than \$5.8 million on the race – more than four times the previous record. The winner, Annette Ziegler, spent more than the previous record for total spending in a high court race. And one special interest group – Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce – was responsible for more than one-third of all spending in the race.

Workplace giving a way to make change in your own backyard

The oldest social action fund in the country, Community Shares of Wisconsin, connects donors with nearly 60 local nonprofit groups building social and economic equity and a healthy environment.

Community Shares raises funds for its member agencies – including the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign – through workplace giving campaigns at private sector companies. Public sector employees can give to Community Shares and its member agencies through their Combined Campaign.

If you work for an employer that operates a workplace giving campaign including Community Shares, please help them help us by giving generously this fall. There are two ways you can support WDC through Community Shares.

You can designate your gift to the Wisconsin



Democracy Campaign and we will get 100% of your contribution. Or, you can direct your gift to Community Shares and support WDC along with the many other worthy nonprofits.

Please spread the word about this valuable way of supporting worthy causes including the work of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, and encourage employers in your community to become part of the growing network of businesses and government agencies that give their employees the opportunity to change the world in their own backyards. If your employer does not have a workplace campaign, contact Community Shares at **608-256-1066** to see about starting one.

\$17 million spent on lobbying

Interest groups spent 141,000 hours and more than \$17 million in the first half of 2007 trying to influence state lawmakers, according to records filed with the state Ethics Board. The top 10 lobbying groups alone – led by the Wisconsin Hospital Association – spent more than \$2.7 million and 3,200 hours twisting lawmakers’ arms.

A new sheriff in town

2007 Wisconsin Act 1 – the Democracy Campaign-backed ethics reform legislation enacted into law during a January special session of the Legislature called by Governor Jim Doyle – creates a new politically independent enforcement agency, the Government Accountability Board, to regulate elections, ethics, lobbying and campaign finance in Wisconsin. The new nonpartisan board replaces the state Elections Board and Ethics Board and merges the staff and functions of the two agencies into one.

On July 11, the Assembly unanimously confirmed three members of the new board. A few weeks earlier, the Senate confirmed the other three members. All six members, each of whom is a former elected judge in Wisconsin, had been nominated in June by Governor Doyle. Confirmed and now able to begin work, the members of GAB

and able to begin work, the board members include former state appeals court judges Thomas Cane of Wausau, David Deininger of Monroe and William Eich of Madison, and former county circuit court judges Michael W. Brennan of Marshfield, James Mohr of Eagle River and Gerald Nichol of Madison.

The new board's first task will be to organize the new agency, hire a director and two division administrators. Then, in addition to all of its other duties, the ethics reform law requires the board to review all of the existing internal operating procedures, guidelines, rules, orders and formal opinions issued by the Elections Board and Ethics Board. Within its first 12 months, GAB must review and reaffirm each of these items or they will terminate by law automatically.

The board's first meeting was August 23.