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American Tort
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CALIFORNIA
2017-2023
CAMPAIGN FINANCE ANALYSIS
*Plaintiffs' Firms &
PAC Contributions*

POWER PLAYERS: TOP PLAINTIFFS' FIRM DONORS

The Top 20 plaintiffs' firms for political donations statewide in California contributed more than \$15.473 million to California-based candidates and committees since 2017. One firm – Walkup, Melodia, Kelly & Schoenberger – gave more than \$2.5 million. Four more firms gave more than \$1 million. Seven additional firms gave between \$600,000 and \$1 million since 2017. Another eight firms gave more than \$225,000.

Top 20 Plaintiffs' Firm Donors In California Since 2017	
Law Firm	Total Given
Law Offices of Walkup, Melodia, Kelly, Wecht & Schoenberger APC	\$2,574,201
Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy, LLP	\$1,503,937
Knight Law Group LLP	\$1,206,088
Singleton Schreiber, LLP	\$1,087,877
Altair Law	\$1,064,823
Dreyer, Babich, Buccola & Callahan LLP	\$959,541
Panish Shea & Boyle, LLP	\$848,151
Lieff, Cabraser, Heimann & Bernstein, LLP	\$810,316
Greene, Broillet & Wheeler	\$780,824
Bentley & More	\$700,230
Robinson Calcagnie, Inc.	\$613,950
Shernoff, Bidart, Echeverria, LLP	\$605,127
Baron and Budd, P.C.	\$433,383
Ernst Law Group	\$395,756
Arias, Sanguinetti, Stahle & Torrijos, LLP	\$395,718
McNicholas & McNicholas	\$370,370
Rizio Lipinsky Law Firm	\$328,567
Kazan, McClain, Satterley & Greenwood	\$300,560
The Veen Firm	\$268,733
Strategic Legal Practices APC	\$225,400
Grand Total	\$15,473,551

(Source: [California Secretary Of State](#))

TOP RECIPIENTS FROM TOP PLAINTIFFS' FIRMS

Since 2017, the Top 3 recipients of political giving by the Top 20 plaintiffs' firm donors in California were committees affiliated with the Consumer Attorneys of California, the state's advocacy group for trial lawyers. The three committees received nearly \$6.7 million from the Top 20 plaintiffs' firms for political giving since 2017. More than \$2.5 million went to both the Consumer Attorneys of California's "Initiative Defense" PAC and their "Independent Campaign" committee. An additional \$1.3 million went to the Consumer Attorneys of California's official PAC. Nearly \$2 million went to various committees supporting California Governor Gavin Newsom. A majority of the money went to committees either with no limit (non-candidate committees) or those supporting the governor, which have a campaign contribution limit of \$36,400 per election.[1]

Top Recipients from Top 20 Plaintiffs' Firms for Campaign Contributions Since 2017	
Campaigns And Committees	Total Received
Consumer Attorneys of California Initiative Defense Political Action Committee	\$2,795,200
Consumer Attorneys of California Independent Campaign Committee	\$2,567,939
Consumer Attorneys of California Political Action Committee	\$1,316,667
ActBlue California	\$1,240,278
Gavin Newsom	\$1,061,443
Stop the Republican Recall of Governor Newsom	\$861,970
Fund Her PAC	\$448,124
California Democratic Party	\$425,300
Rob Bonta	\$340,575
Xavier Becerra	\$256,550
Dave Jones	\$227,056
ActBlue	\$222,252
Eloise Gomez Reyes	\$140,300
Thomas J. Umberg	\$112,350
Mark Stone	\$110,400
Damon Connolly	\$110,200
Kipp Mueller	\$105,176

(Source: California Secretary Of State).

[1] Kimberly Rayley, "California Raises Campaign Contribution And Gift Limits For 2023-2024," [Inside Political Law](#), 11/18/22

CONSUMER ATTORNEYS OF CALIFORNIA PAC ANALYSIS

The Consumer Attorneys of California have four main political committees that each serve different functions. The Consumer Attorneys of California’s Independent Campaign Committee mainly supports direct expenditures to independent committees and the California Democratic Party. The California Alliance, which received more than \$2.2 million, was an independent expenditure group in opposition to the recall of Governor Newsom, with trial lawyer funding coming via direct contributions from the Consumer Attorneys of California’s Independent Campaign Committee and the Consumer Attorneys of California’s main political action committee. [1]

Total Spent By Each Consumer Attorneys of California PAC	
Committee	Total Spent
Consumer Attorneys of California Independent Campaign Committee	\$3,202,351
Consumer Attorneys of California Political Action Committee	\$2,836,825
Consumer Attorneys of California Initiative Defense Political Action Committee	\$809,080
Consumer Attorneys of California Consumer Protection Fund	\$205,940
Grand Total	\$7,054,196

(Source: California Secretary Of State)

The Consumer Attorneys of California Initiative Defense Political Action Committee is focused on direct political expenditures. The two other groups – the Consumer Attorneys of California Political Action Committee and the Consumer Attorneys of California Consumer Protection Fund – are focused on direct campaign contributions.

Top Recipients Of Consumer Attorney PAC Money	
Campaigns and Committees	Total Received
California Alliance, A Coalition of Consumer Attorneys, Conservationists and Food and Commercial Workers	\$2,211,000
California Democratic Party	\$367,044
Consumer Attorneys of California	\$327,272
Paschal Roth Public Affairs, Inc.	\$244,511
Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates	\$169,500
N Strategic, LLC	\$155,000
Californians Allied to Support Caroline Menjivar for Senate 2022	\$100,000
Josh Newman Opposed to the Recall, Friends of	\$100,000

(Source: California Secretary Of State)

[1] Press Release, “California Alliance Celebrates Defeat of Destructive And Costly Republican Recall,” [California Environmental Voters](#), 9/16/21

INTERESTING DATA POINTS & ANALYSIS

The Big Five Recipients of Trial Lawyer Contributions

Due to strict campaign contribution limits, any candidate committee pulling in more than \$100,000 from trial lawyers shows a level of sustained industry support. Current California Governor Gavin Newsom's various campaign committees received more than \$1.9 million in trial lawyer contributions from the Top 20 plaintiffs' firm donors. Campaign contribution limits for candidates for governor are \$36,400 per election, meaning a number of trial lawyers gave maximum contributions to his campaign.[1]

Current Attorney General Rob Bonta and former Attorney General Xavier Becerra received approximately \$340,000 and \$250,000 respectively. Campaign contribution limits for candidates running for California statewide offices (other than candidates for governor) are \$9,100 per election. [2] Former California Insurance Commissioner Dave Jones also received more than \$225,000 in campaign contributions from the Top 20 plaintiffs' firm donors. Former Assembly Majority Leader Eloise Reyes raised approximately \$140,000 from the Top 20 plaintiffs' firm donors at a maximum contribution level of \$5,500 per election.[3]

Consumer Attorneys of California Behind Independent Expenditures for Legislative Candidates

The Consumer Attorneys of California Independent Campaign Committee spent \$50,000 or more on independent expenditure campaigns on behalf of eight different legislative campaigns since 2017. Two legislative independent expenditures received more than \$100,000: an independent campaign committee that successfully backed Caroline Menjivar for State Senate and an independent campaign committee opposing the successful recall of then-State Senator Josh Newman. A total of \$65,000 was spent on an independent expenditure campaign backing Mike Eng's unsuccessful race for state senate in 2018, with \$50,000 spent each on independent expenditure campaigns backing Rep. Reggie Jones-Sawyer, Rep. Wendy Carrillo, Rep. Lisa Calderon, Rep. Cottie Petrie-Norris and then-Sen. Sydney Kamlager.

[1] Ibid
[2] Ibid
[3] Ibid

Top Trial Bar Advertisers and Their Campaign Contributions

Fourteen of California’s top local legal services advertisers also donated directly to candidates and committees, totaling nearly \$1.5 million. One firm – Singleton Schreiber – donated more than \$1 million to California candidates and causes since 2017. Two firms – Lalezary Law and Phoong Law – also gave more than \$100,000 during the same timeframe.

Ten candidates and committees received \$25,000 or more from the top trial lawyer advertisers, with two committees affiliated with the Consumer Attorneys of California receiving more than \$200,000 from the top local legal services advertisers in the state. One additional committee, the Fairness for Injured Patients Act Coalition, received just over \$100,000 from top local legal services advertisers in California.

Campaign Contributions from California Top Local Legal Services Advertisers Since 2017	
Firms	Total Given
Singleton Schreiber, LLP	\$1,087,877
Lalezary Law Firm	\$123,852
Phoong Law	\$113,457
BD&J	\$72,700
Law Offices of Jacob Emrani	\$25,000
Sweet James LLP	\$24,500
Jacoby & Meyers	\$13,276
Berg Injury Lawyers	\$7,150
Morgan & Morgan, P.A.	\$4,400
Law Offices of Larry H. Parker	\$3,000
Ellis Law Group	\$2,500
The Barnes Firm, LC	\$875
Dominguez Law Firm	\$748
Maune, Ralchle, Hartley, French & Mudd, LLC	\$525
Grand Total	\$1,479,860

(Source: California Secretary Of State).

Top Recipients of Campaign Contributions from California Top Local Legal Services Advertisers Since 2017	
Campaigns and Committees	Total Received
Consumer Attorneys of California Initiative Defense Political Action Committee	\$288,747
ActBlue California	\$231,901
Consumer Attorneys of California Independent Campaign Committee	\$226,425
Fairness for Injured Patients Act Coalition	\$100,150
Consumer Attorneys of California Political Action Committee	\$77,304
Fund Her PAC	\$70,975
Rob Bonta for CA Attorney General 2026	\$33,200
Newsom for California Governor 2022	\$32,400
California Democratic Party	\$31,100
San Diego County Democratic Party	\$25,000

(Source: California Secretary Of State).

METHODOLOGY

Due to limitations on what can be searched in California campaign finance disclosures, the list of top firms was created by combining all the campaign contributions to the top three groups run by the Consumer Attorneys of California and pulling the top law firm contributors to those groups. From there, all the contributions from those firms were put into a broader database for analysis.