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[AFL-CIO Fact Sheet - Corporate versus Union Spending on Politics] [loose]

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Corporate vs. Union Spending on Politics

There's too much money in politics -- but it's not union money

■ **The political balance of power is already tilted heavily in favor of corporations.** In the 1996 election cycle, corporate interests spent more than $653 million on political contributions -- 11 times more than unions spent. So while unions contributed less than 4 percent of the $1.6 billion raised by candidates and parties in 1996, corporations contributed more than 40 percent.

■ **The disparity between corporate and union spending is growing.** Since 1992 (when the ratio was 9-to-1), corporate political contributions have increased by $205.8 million, while union contributions rose by only $10 million.

■ **In "soft money" contributions, the gap is even wider.** While both corporations and unions have increased their unrestricted, so-called "soft money" contributions since 1992, corporate spending grew twice as fast. In 1996, corporations spent nearly $203 million -- 23 times more than unions did.

■ **Corporate special interests are pushing initiatives that would skew the balance even further.** By backing special restrictions on unions while imposing no such limits on themselves, big corporations are trying to remove working families and their unions from the political playing field.

■ **Corporations, right-wing foundations and anti-union lobbying groups are raising hundreds of millions of dollars to "de-fund" unions.** At a recent meeting of the Republican Governors Association, proponents of the initiatives noted that the de-funding ploy has two strategic benefits: If it works, unions will lose funding. Even if it doesn't, unions will be forced to spend millions of dollars in the fight.

SOURCE: Center for Responsive Politics and Federal Election Commission

Total Contributions

	Corporations	Unions	Ratio
1996	$653,439,623	$58,105,146	**11-to-1**
1994	$492,956,181	$48,319,054	10-to-1
1992	$447,594,985	$48,152,256	9-to-1

Soft Money Contributions

	Corporations	Unions	Ratio
1996	$202,898,641	$8,846,650	**23-to-1**
1994	$ 64,753,971	$4,293,459	15-to-1
1992	$ 66,342,241	$4,251,334	16-to-1

Hard Money Contributions

	Corporations	Unions	Ratio
1996	$450,540,982	$49,258,496	**9-to-1**
1994	$428,202,210	$44,025,595	10-to-1
1992	$381,252,744	$44,067,720	9-to-1