

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of Campaign and Political Finance

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**PAC contributions total \$2.25 million in 2001-02 cycle,
according to OCPF study**

Political action committees in Massachusetts made a total of \$2.25 million in contributions to state and county candidates in the 2001-2002 election cycle, according to a study released today by the Office of Campaign and Political Finance.

The two-year total is the second highest of any election cycle since OCPF began tracking and publishing studies of total PAC activity in 1982. The cycle featuring the highest total contributions was 1989-90 (\$2,289,158).

The figures illustrate a continued resurgence of PAC activity from a relative lull in the mid-1990s, when changes in the campaign finance law led to a decline in the number of PACs and in activity by those remaining. At that time PAC contributions dipped to their lowest figure in ten years and the average amount donated reached the lowest level ever recorded in an OCPF study.

About two-thirds of the 300 PACs registered with OCPF reported making at least one contribution in the most recent election cycle.

The findings of the study in brief:

Annual rankings

In the rankings of the last 21 individual years, the total PAC contribution figure of \$1,294,807 for 2002 ranks as the third highest annual total and the highest posted since the all-time high of \$1,401,299 in 1994. The 2002 contribution figure represents an increase of just over \$200,000 from the previous election year, 2000.

The contribution total for 2001, \$958,778, is the second-highest such figure for a non-election year, trailing the \$961,000 posted in 1999.

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Average contribution

The average contribution was \$246 in 2001, an increase of \$18 from the year before. The average rose to \$265 in 2002, which was the highest figure since 1994, when the average was \$270. (The highest average ever recorded was \$331 in 1983; the all-time low was the \$200 recorded in 1996.)

Categories of recipients

Statistics from 2001-2002 showed the most common recipients of PAC money in past cycles – candidates for the Legislature, winning candidates, Democrats and incumbents -- continued to receive a substantial majority of contributions.

Most active PACs

Labor, business and professional interests once again accounted for the most active PACs in 2001-2002. Of the Top 20 PACs for total contributions to candidates in the cycle, 16 represented labor groups such as unions, including public safety, building trades and public employees, both active and retired. That is the same breakdown found in the 1999-2000 cycle, though some of the PACs in the list have changed.

Of the remaining four PACs in the Top 20, three represent business or professional groups, including beer distributors, bankers and optometrists, while the fourth is the PAC representing House Democrats.

The top PAC in terms of contributions for the cycle was the Retired Public Employees PAC, which reported giving \$94,650 over two years. The committee was also the top PAC in terms of contributions in the 1999-2000 cycle, when it reported giving \$86,650.

A copy of the study may be found on OCPF's web site at www.mass.gov/ocpf. The web site also includes annual contribution totals for each PAC that was registered with OCPF in 2001-02.

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