

**Transparency and Campaign Spending in Minnesota, Report 4:
Independent Expenditures on Federal Elections***

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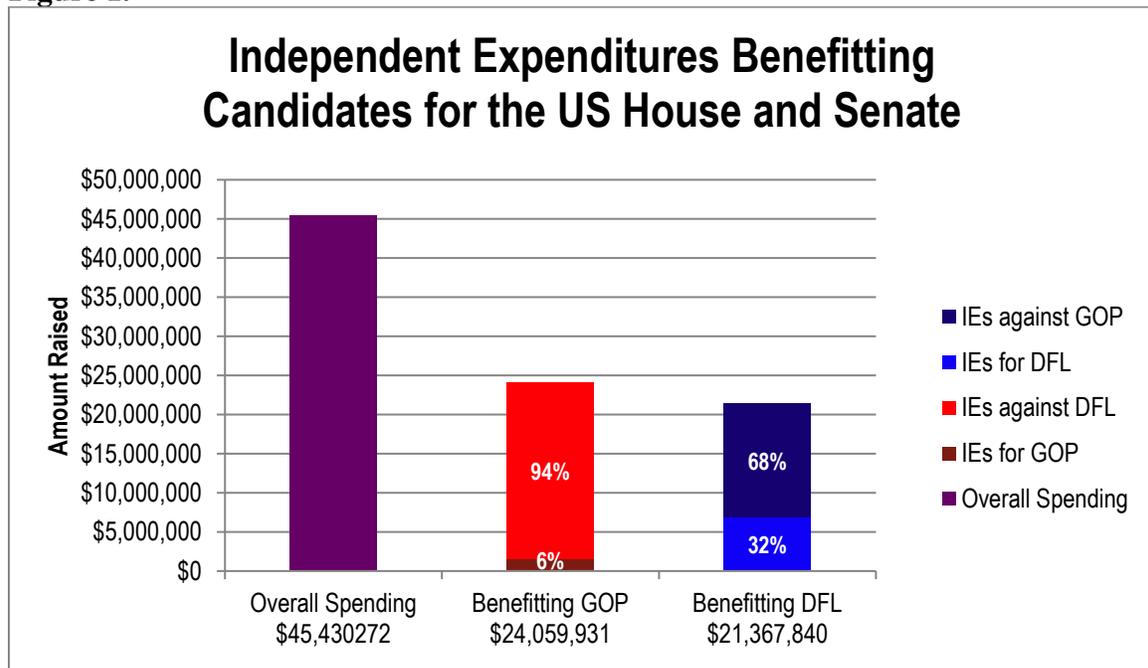
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Independent expenditures by parties, groups, corporations, unions, associations and individuals are flooding Minnesota, flowing mainly to four U.S. House races. (Independent expenditures are made by groups and parties to support or oppose a candidate without any coordination with the candidates).

- **More than \$45 million was spent by independent expenditure groups** (Figure 1). Republican U.S. House and U.S. Senate candidates are receiving nearly \$3 million more than Democrats from independent expenditure groups (Figure 1).
- **Most of the independent expenditures are spent on negative advertising.**

Nearly all of the money helping Republicans (94 percent) was spent attacking DFL candidates, while groups helping Democrats spent 68% attacking Republicans.

Figure 1.



Most of the independent expenditure spending came from groups affiliated with the Republican and Democratic parties focused on winning the majority in the U.S. House of Representatives (Figure 2). The second tier of groups supported each party’s political activists and policy agenda.

America First Action is a national political action committee that promotes President Trump’s agenda. Nearly a fifth of its total spending targeted Minnesota.
<https://www.opensecrets.org/pacs/lookup2.php?strID=C00637512&cycle=2018>

On the Democratic side, Giffords PAC and the End Citizens United support gun restrictions and campaign finance reform, respectively.

Figure 2. Top groups making independent expenditures

GOP	Total Spent
Congressional Leadership Fund	\$8,831,348
NRCC	\$8,571,263
America First Action, INC.	\$4,995,164
US Chamber of Commerce	\$250,000
National Rifle Association of America	\$246,383
DFL	
DCCC	\$7,457,584
House Majority PAC	\$3,940,070
Giffords PAC	\$1,353,576
End Citizens United	\$1,344,390
VoteVets	\$989,029

*Independent expenditures for GOP include spending for GOP candidates and against DFL candidates and independent expenditures for DFL include spending for DFL candidates and against GOP candidates