



## More Trouble Brewing for Rand Paul Super PACs?

Jessica Hopper

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Just weeks after the leader of a Super PAC supporting Rand Paul was indicted, it was revealed that another Super PAC supporting the Kentucky senator and presidential hopeful has been dormant since June.

Politico first reported today that Purple PAC, a Super PAC founded by Ed Crane, has not been actively fundraising for Paul.

"We haven't really been actively soliciting money until we feel the Purple PAC and Rand are on the same page," Purple PAC leader Ed Crane told ABC News.

Crane said that the Super PAC hasn't shut down, but other than a \$10,000 contest, the PAC hasn't raised or spent any money to help Paul since June.

Paul's campaign has struggled to gain traction with voters. Crane, a libertarian activist and co-founder of the Cato Institute, created Purple PAC in 2013 and shifted the PAC's focus on raising money for Paul this summer.

"Within a couple of days we got two or three donations and we said we're not going anywhere with this until we're certain the campaign is on the right track and at the time we didn't think it was," Crane said.

Crane said that he has been disappointed with Paul's campaign strategy.

"All of sudden his campaign decided he's going to be a mainstream candidate and that took some steam out of his candidacy," Crane said.

Crane feels that Paul has been "off in too many directions" instead of sticking to his "core message of peace and free enterprise." But Crane also had praise for Paul.

"I think he's been terrific on the NSA and civil liberties," Crane said.

Crane hasn't ruled out returning to fundraising for Paul or doing more to help Paul's struggling campaign. He said that the timetable for making a decision would be within the next month.

"[Purple PAC] never got off the ground and it will one day, possibly, if Rand starts using the more libertarian approach," Crane said.

Three Super PACs have fundraised for Paul since he announced his candidacy in April: Purple PAC, Concerned American Voters and America's Liberty PAC. These Super PACs have raised a combined \$6.19 million, far lower than the money raised by Super PACs supporting rivals Ted Cruz and Jeb Bush. Paul's campaign raised \$5.33 million between April and the end of June.

Sergio Gor, a spokesman for Senator Rand Paul's campaign, says that Purple PAC's dormancy doesn't hurt the Paul campaign because the super PAC had done little, if anything, to help bolster Paul's candidacy. According to the most recent FEC reports available, Purple PAC has no independent expenditures.

"It is untruthful for a story to say that this Super PAC stopped supporting Senator Paul, when in fact they don't seem to have lifted a finger in the first place," Gor said.

"The PACs that were set up to help Rand Paul and have done work to do so remain active and ongoing," Gor said.

Gor is referring to America's Liberty PAC and Concerned American Voters. America's Liberty PAC says on its website that it is the only Super PAC endorsed by Senator Paul. Concerned American Voters has produced video ads supporting Paul. America's Liberty PAC saw a change in leadership this summer after its initial leader, Jesse Benton, was indicted. In August, Benton was indicted on federal charges that he was involved in bribing an Iowa politician to shift his allegiance to endorse Ron Paul in the 2012 presidential race.

ABC News reached out to Concerned American Voters and a spokesman confirmed that it was still actively fundraising for the Kentucky senator.

"We're very pleased with what we're quietly doing right now. Rand will rise again in this next quarter," said Jeff Frazee, president of Concerned American Voters, in an email.

While Crane feels that Paul isn't showing his libertarian roots enough, the senior adviser to Concerned American Voters appears to feel the opposite.

In a statement, Matt Kibbe, senior adviser to Concerned American Voters, said, "We are still 100 percent committed to electing Rand Paul. More donors are warming and becoming energized as a result of Rand's performance in the last debate. They really want a principled, libertarian voice on issues like foreign policy, tax cuts, and criminal justice reform."

Kibbe also said in the statement that the Super PAC is focused on "get out the vote" mechanics, particularly in Iowa.

"Rand is unique because of his track record and leadership on these issues. Once we get through these flavors of the week and the field narrows, Rand will emerge as the anti-establishment choice," Kibbe said.

Paul, himself, will be holding fundraisers for his presidential and senate campaign this week. Some insiders have questioned whether fundraising for his Senate campaign shows his presidential campaign is in trouble.

"Senator Paul has been clear he's running for both, so we'll fundraise for both," said Gor.

Paul defended his campaign's viability in multiple interviews today and said that fundraising for his Senate campaign shouldn't be misconstrued.

"I am running for Senate concurrently, but I've been raising money for my Senate run for the past two years. So this is nothing new," Paul told Fox News.

Paul also said that his presidential campaign is in it for the long haul. Earlier today, Paul's wife, Kelley Paul, filed the paperwork for her husband to participate in the South Carolina primary.

"We're in it to win it. We're in it for the long haul. We're organizing in all 50 states for the presidency. We have 350 different college groups that were started in different colleges across America," Paul told Fox News.