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Victory on Healthcare a Loss for the Kochs

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The victory on health care reform is a victory against the Koch brothers, who spent massive sums to defeat the Affordable Care Act at the Supreme Court. It turns out the Kochs can lose and democracy can win.

Consider just how involved the Koch brothers had been in this case. When right-wing activists rallied at the Supreme Court in March for the "[Hands Off My Health Care](#)" protest, they were organized by Americans for Prosperity (AFP). As discussed in Brave New Foundation's latest film, *Koch Brothers Exposed*, AFP is Koch-founded and -financed. Indeed, David Koch is chairman of the group's supposedly nonpolitical wing. AFP is so much the Kochs' baby that the brothers recently created a firestorm by trying to turn Cato Institute — another group that they started but has shown streaks of independence — into an "[intellectual ammo-shop](#)" for it. No matter how much AFP likes to portray itself as being grassroots, the only reason it's in operation is two billionaires want it to be.

Moreover, numerous groups that supported the legal effort to overturn health care reform are recipients of Koch money. Cato, to which the Kochs have given about [\\$30 million](#) over the years and which bears deep Koch DNA despite the recent family feud, joined an amicus brief. So did Freedom Works, which has received at least [\\$5 million](#) from the Kochs. The [Competitive Enterprise Institute](#), the Pacific Research Institute, the Texas Public Policy Foundation — all have received large sums from Koch-controlled foundations and petitioned the Supreme Court on this case.

Indeed, the Kochs funded the very group that initially filed one of the lawsuits at hand. The National Federation of Independent Business has its name [right there](#) on the lawsuit against Kathleen Sebelius and the Department of Health & Human Services, and it secured Koch funding to the tune of [\\$88,000](#).

The health care effort is, of course, just one small piece of a broader Koch agenda to create a society where more wealth flows up instead of down — where, under the guise of freedom, elites run the show and ordinary citizens lack any real say over their government and workplace. The brothers' network of organizations is expected to spend [about \\$400 million](#) — and that's just what we know about — to influence the 2012 election in the hopes of making this agenda increasingly a reality.

But today, that agenda was dealt a serious blow. As powerful as the Kochs are, truth and common sense can win the day. And that's especially true when Americans organize. After all, Supreme Court justices are not superhumans who are immune to public opinion and the political debate. They watch the news. They read blogs. The Koch-funded Right was effective at mobilizing against health care reform, but countless other activists, despite not being as well financed, made sure the Right didn't monopolize the debate.

So today, we breathe a sigh of relief. Tomorrow, we redouble our efforts to keep the Kochs from commandeering our country.