



CCP's Keating and Cato's Crane Explain Why You Shouldn't Fear Super PACs

Published on February 13, 2012

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The Center for Competitive Politics' new President David Keating recently penned an op-ed with Ed Crane, President of The Cato Institute, that was published in The Wall Street Journal on Friday, February 10, 2012. The piece, entitled ["Meet the Parents of the Super PACs: Political spending is good for democracy. It's a shame today's liberals don't trust the wisdom of voters"](#) was intended to present the history of the cases that led to the emergence of the super PAC — and to lay to rest once for all the fear that these entities are doing damage to the election process. From the WSJ piece:

Money is a proxy for information in campaigns. Yet Americans spend as much on potato chips as they do on all federal elections (\$3.6 billion in 2010). Maybe that partly explains why most Americans cannot name their congressman, much less say where he or she stands on the issues.

That's why we believe Super PACs are a good thing. In the recent Republican South Carolina primary, Super PACs reportedly outspent the candidates' campaigns by two to one. That means more information was available on the candidates and more interest in the campaigns has been generated. It could be argued that Super PACS are the reason the GOP primary campaign this year is a horse race and not a coronation.

That said, we'd prefer to allow donors to give money to candidates' campaigns directly. Under such a system Super PACs would still exist, but they'd likely have less influence. And donors could give their candidates a stronger voice in the messaging about their campaigns.