

Johnson Campaign Source Claims David Koch To Pledge Millions... UPDATE: Koch Rep Denies Pledge

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Billionaire businessman and philanthropist David Koch has pledged “tens of millions of dollars” to help bankroll the campaign of Libertarian presidential candidate Gary Johnson, according to a source within Johnson’s campaign.

Koch’s money will be made available should Johnson, a former two-term Republican governor of New Mexico, secure his second consecutive Libertarian Party presidential nomination, the source said.

The Libertarians will select their presidential ticket during the party’s national convention later this month in Orlando.

When asked about Koch’s eight-figure pledge to support Johnson, a source close to David Koch did not deny that such an agreement is in place.

A Koch spokesman initially declined to comment on the record.

But after publication, the spokesman told ThDC: “Reports that David Koch has pledged his support to Gary Johnson – or any candidate running for president for that matter – are untrue.”

Despite that denial, a source with a leadership position in the Libertarian Party told The Daily Caller Thursday afternoon that Johnson’s on track to receive the billionaire’s support.

“In the event that a Johnson/[Bill] Weld ticket emerges from the convention, a pathway is in place for significant funding from Koch, [Steve] Wynn and other large donors,” the source said.

A Koch representative maintained that David is not “supporting or considering supporting any third party presidential candidate.”

Reached by phone early Tuesday morning, Johnson’s campaign manager Ron Nielson told The Daily Caller that the campaign had no intention of publicly confirming donor commitments ahead of the party’s convention.

Nielson also urged The DC to reveal its campaign source.

While David Koch, and his brother Charles, are frequently associated with Republican and conservative causes, David was the Libertarian Party's vice-presidential candidate in 1980. He also sits on the board of the Cato Institute, the nation's most prominent libertarian-oriented think tank.

The revelation that Koch could offer significant financial support to the Johnson campaign came just hours after Johnson announced a running mate who may assist in securing additional funding from another billionaire.

On Wednesday, in a story first reported by The Daily Caller, Johnson chose former Massachusetts Governor Bill Weld as his running mate.

In addition to his credentials as a twice-elected libertarian-leaning Republican governor, Weld recently served as attorney and chief lobbyist for casino mogul Steve Wynn during a fight to secure a state license to develop a resort and casino in suburban Boston.

The source within Johnson's campaign admitted that "Wynn is likely to be a very important supporter" of the campaign as a result of the Las Vegas casino owner's relationship with Weld.

The Libertarian Party selects its presidential and vice presidential nominees separately, so it is possible that Johnson may be stuck with a running mate other than Weld. It is unclear whether Wynn would be as likely to support Johnson if Weld were not part of the ticket.

A message to Steve Wynn's spokesman was not returned.

The potential infusion of money into the Libertarian Party presidential ticket could help Johnson reach mainstream voters this year.

"People are upset and are looking for an alternative to the broken two party system," said Nevada Libertarian Party Chairman Brett H. Pojunis.

"If the Libertarian candidate is successful raising money, the media will have a hard time ignoring that candidate," according to Pojunis. "Especially with a public hungry for an alternative to two of the most polarizing figures in American political history."