



## Koch Brothers Still Targeting Campaign Finance Laws

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The conservative billionaire Koch brothers are still targeting campaign finance laws, and have heavily funded organizations that have participated in legal challenges against regulation of money in politics, according to a report published Wednesday by the Center for Public Integrity.

Charles Koch provided \$350,000 in seed money for the Institute for Justice, a nonprofit, libertarian public interest law firm based in Virginia. The Cato Institute, previously named the Charles Koch Foundation, has received funding from the Charles Koch Foundation, and the Center for Competitive Politics, now called the Institute for Free Speech, has Koch connections.

All three organizations have been involved in fighting campaign finance regulation, including a federal court ruling that allowed for the creation of "independent expenditure-only committees," or political groups soon named "super PACs" which could accept unlimited money from labor unions, corporations and 501(c)(4) nonprofits.

Cato and the Institute for Justice filed an amicus brief in the 2003 case *McConnell et al v. FEC*, which struck down the age restrictions on minors' ability to contribute money to politicians as a violation of free speech rights. And in 2010, Cato, the Center for Competitive Politics and the Institute for Justice chimed in on the *Citizens United v. FEC*, where the Supreme Court ruled corporations, unions, and certain nonprofits could raise and spend unlimited amounts of money to advocate for or against politicians.

"We stand against campaign finance laws in general," Cato Institute research fellow Trevor Burrus said. "We believe that most campaign finance laws are unconstitutional. They are clear impediments of political speech."

Larry Noble, general counsel for the Campaign Legal Center, said the Kochs were "not the only group in the game."

"But I think what you'll see, it's a deep well with a long-term commitment."