

25 of 113 DOCUMENTS

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## **Non-Incumbent Election Winners Raised Few Dollars from Telecom, Media, Technology PACs**

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The wave of incoming freshmen legislators in the House had little early help from the telecom, media and technology industries, an analysis of campaign finance data shows. Among non-incumbent candidates who won seats in the House or Senate, only a handful received more than \$5,000 in direct contributions from the large political action committees associated with those industries by October. We looked at contributions made to candidates by PACs including those of USTelecom, NCTA, NAB, CTIA, Verizon, AT&T, CWA, Qwest, Comcast, Disney Employees, Clear Channel, Google and Microsoft, based on Federal Elections Commission data compiled by CQ Moneyline. Contributions made within the final eight weeks of the campaign aren't yet reflected in the available data.

AT&T and Verizon were the clear frontrunners in donating early to the campaigns of non-incumbents who either toppled sitting legislators or won open seats Tuesday. AT&T's PAC gave \$67,500 to the campaigns of non-incumbents who won Senate seats Tuesday, while Verizon's gave \$40,000 to those candidates, we found. In House races, AT&T's PAC donated \$41,000 to new representatives while Verizon's gave \$29,000. The amounts represent just a fraction of the PACs' overall donations, but they far exceed the contributions to those campaigns by other communications industry PACs.

House veterans who won Senate seats drew the most early contributions from communications sector PACs. Rep. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., raised the most money early on from the sector in his bid for the Senate. He raised more than \$48,000 early on from a variety of communications industry PACs, including NAB, the American Cable Associations and Viacom. Tea Party winner Marco Rubio, senator-elect from Florida, received \$2,500 from each Verizon and AT&T's PAC. Sen.-elect Rand Paul of Kentucky, another Tea Party winner, got \$2,500 from Verizon's PAC.

Some defeated incumbents raised significant sums from communications industry PACs. The failed campaign of Communications Subcommittee Chairman Rick Boucher, D-Va., (see separate report in this issue) received contributions from 19 of the 21 PACs we tracked. The PACs we tracked gave more to Boucher's campaign than they did to all the non-incumbent winning candidates in the House combined.

Companies typically fund incumbents because incumbency usually breeds victory, said Darrell West, director of the Center for Technology Innovation at the Brookings Institution. "What was unusual this year was the voter anger that made a number of incumbents vulnerable," he said. "The smart companies targeted some of the new people running. This will be a big help to them now that several of those individuals won."

By funding the campaigns of incoming legislators early on, Verizon and AT&T may have done a better job than others at reading the tea leaves of the election, granting them "a margin of access, which gets you a margin of influence," said Jim Harper, a scholar at the Cato Institute. Because new members of Congress tend to be ineffective legislators off the bat, their support may not reap huge rewards right away, he said. Some of the Tea Party-backed winners may be less comfortable with being lobbied by supporters than would be other candidates who came up through more established political machines, he said. "The new crop in the House is going to be relatively resistant to traditional lobbying."

The election coverage package was written by Adam Bender, Howard Buskirk, Jonathan Make, Louis Trager, David Hansen, Josh Wein, Yu-Ting Wang, Kamala Lane, Bill Myers and Tim Warren.

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