

The logo for TPM (The Political Machine) is displayed in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters against a solid red rectangular background.

You Can Thank The Supreme Court For Newt Gingrich's Extended Campaign

RYAN J. REILLY JANUARY 25, 2012, 5:03 AM

When he gets finished thanking casino magnate Sheldon Adelson's wife for [plopping down \\$5 million into a "super PAC" supporting his run for the Republican nomination](#), Newt Gingrich might want to send the Supreme Court a fruit basket.

After all, without them, he probably wouldn't still be in this thing.

It wasn't so long ago, remember, that Gingrich's campaign was [on the financial ropes](#). His campaign finance team [quit in June](#) and the latest currently available data (running through Sept. 30) showed his campaign had \$353,416.71 in cash on hand and was \$1,192,865.82 in the hole.

Were this 2008, that probably would have been the end of the line for Gingrich: he wouldn't have had the cash to run any ads in the early primary states. But the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision — which celebrated its two-year anniversary over the weekend — gave life to "independent expenditure" political action committees closely tied to political campaigns, letting Gingrich's broke campaign carry on with a little help from Newt's pal [Mr. Adelson](#). We won't know until sometime later this month exactly how much the Gingrich-connected Winning The Future super PAC took in during its short existence (we can only get a bottom line estimate based on their [independent expenditures](#) and the publicly reported fact that

they've taken in at least \$10 million from the Adelsons). But it is clear that the super PAC's expenditures have dwarfed those of the official Gingrich campaign and that Gingrich likely wouldn't still be around had it not been for Winning Our Future, a fact acknowledged on both sides of the aisle.

"Absent that Super PAC spending (and the contribution that made it possible), Mr. Gingrich's candidacy would have come to an end no later than the end of the New Hampshire primary," [wrote](#) the CATO Institute's John Samples.

Of course the major role the super PACs are playing in the race hasn't been an entirely positive development for the Gingrich campaign — the super PAC backing Mitt Romney savaged him with an [onslaught of ads in Iowa](#) that [planted the narrative](#) that Gingrich had too much "baggage" to get to the Oval Office.

Gingrich has longstanding ties with Citizens United, the group who's name is synonymous with the Supreme Court decision bearing its name. Gingrich's company [worked with Citizens United](#) on a movie that described the "final struggle" against radical Islam. Gingrich Productions has produced at least six other films — "We Have The Power," "Rediscovering God in America" and "Rediscovering God In America II: Our Heritage," "Ronald Reagan: Rendezvous With Destiny," "Nine Days that Changed the World," and "A City Upon A Hill" — in partnership with Citizens United. The group [purchased ad time](#) ahead of Iowa's caucus to rerun a commercial for the Reagan film and perhaps connect Gingrich with Reagan in the minds of voters. Citizens United President David Bossie said after a Florida debate that Romney [should stop attacking the "eventual nominee"](#) Gingrich.