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LETTER: Tea Parties are pawns of big donors

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EDITOR: Corporations have been using their excess wealth to counter democracy, destroying the equality in access and influence that was valued in our founding documents. The conservative company Koch Industries has poured more than \$48.5 million dollars into a host of front groups between 1997 to 2008, and there is more that has not been tracked to date.

Some recipients: Mercatus Center, \$9,874,500; [Americans for Prosperity](#), \$5,176,500; The Heritage Foundation, \$3,358,000; The Cato Institute, \$5,278,400 and dozens more.

Most lobby and work on anti-science and climate change denial campaigns. Some do research with predetermined outcomes. Some money goes to legislator's coffers such as [Lisa Murkowski's](#), the former GOP Senator from Alaska who raked in \$20,000.

There has been some recent controversy over a local business-owner spending on political causes as well. This spending at the national or local level is legal, but the motives and morality are legitimately open to question. Wealth can accomplish worldly good, but don't overlook the flipside.

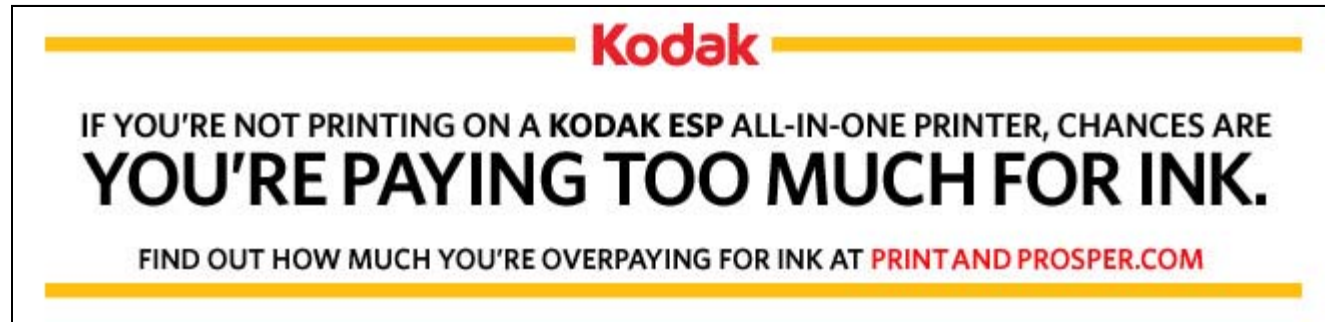
So far the apex of the Tea Party's reasoning abilities has peaked in a few dozen [cars](#) driving in circles with honking horns and an Alabama racist put on their speakers list. When one sees Republican candidates like Sean Duffy and Terrence Wall maneuvering to gain their favor, you have to wonder

why. Contributors might want their money back.

Richard Wentzel,

Edgar

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